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26

T.M.X. Elmo pegged to pick up a LIMA



36

Iconicles gets in at the Beeb with a web hook



45

Disney goes for gold with Princess this year



54

Reaching today's grandparents online

june 07

## Special Report

### p57 LICENSING SHOW 2007

An exclusive research report looks at what moms think about character licensing

- Catching up with Lucas Licensing's Howard Roffman
- Virtual Showroom
- A brand-planning how-to: Getting there in five years



#### Cover

This month's cover is rocking a kick-ass image of diminutive Star Wars hero Yoda. International and event copies feature an ad for Chorion's Mr. Men and Little Miss.

#### Oops!

In the May issue's UpNext feature on page 16, we mistakenly reported that Cookie Jar's *Hurray For Huckle* will air on Qubo in the fall. In that same issue, the article "Selling Screen to Screen" (page 26) stated that Sprout generated more than 10 million views on VOD in 2006; the correct number is 100 million.

## Highlights from this issue

### 21 up front

Joost juices up with animation partners

### 29 ppd

The name game: Deconstructing the fine art of show titling

### 41 licensing

Consumer products execs ponder the new frontier of UGC content

### 49 retail

Peel-and-stick wall decals gear up to take on licenses

### 52 marketing

In time for Father's Day, we take a closer look at the New American Dad

### 55 digital bytes

NPD consumer electronics study shows early adoption happening even earlier

### 90 coolwatch

Kids dish about snacks and shows that rule tube time

## back of the book

86 People Pages

88 Contact File

89 Calendar



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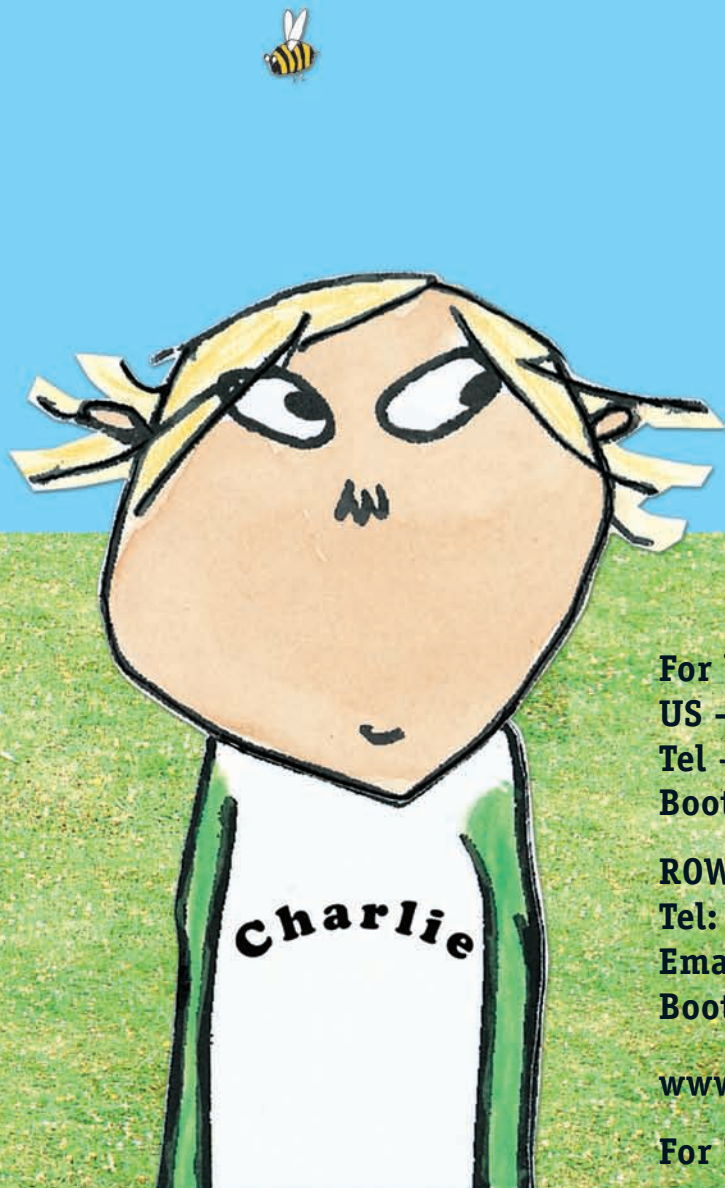
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## There's a tear in my beer

**T**here are lots of great things about working in the kids entertainment industry, but at the top of my list are the people. I can't think of another business community that breeds the kind of long-lasting friendships and sense of family that ours does; I really value that aspect of my working life, and I know you all do, too.

Some of the strongest bonds I've built over the years are with colleagues here at *KidScreen* because our team is so small and our projects so many that we all have to pitch in and work closely together to get everything done. And that makes this month really tough for me, personally, because my partner-in-crime, my right arm, my good friend, my D is leaving the magazine.

Donna and I have worked together on *KidScreen* for nine years (!!!), which is a lifetime in the modern employment market. We both started out at the bottom of the food chain and learned our way up as partners, muddling our way through countless new ventures and challenges, and coming through every experience tighter than ever. She has steered the brand like a champion, grown our businesses exponentially and fostered development opportunities that have consistently strengthened our team. We wouldn't be where we are today without her, and we're going to miss her like crazy!

But the good news is that she'll only be a few blocks away at Spin Master's HQ, where she's taking up the post of senior director of communications. It couldn't be a better move for her, and I'm really looking forward to watching D master the job in record time and shine the way she always does, no matter what she touches. I'm also thrilled that we'll still be working together, albeit in a new way.

As for the rest of us, after we recover from what promises to be the weepiest and booziest send-off in history, we'll do our best to maintain the brand's momentum and make D proud!

In that vein, we're already moving full steam ahead on **KidScreen Summit 2008**, and I'm pleased to announce that we'll be back at the **Hilton New York** this year from **February 13 to 15**.

And just before I sign off for the month, I want to send a big shout-out to everyone who joined us in L.A. last month for *KidScreen West*. It was one of the most insightful and educational conferences I've ever attended, and I'm pretty hard to impress when it comes to content. If you couldn't make it and would like to check out any of the sessions, we've got audio recordings up for download on [www.kidscreenwest.com](http://www.kidscreenwest.com). Take a look when you get a chance.

—joc

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# Saying Thank You

**IT** is with overwhelming feeling and gratitude that I sign off on this, my final issue of *KidScreen*, after an extraordinary nine year love affair with the people, the business and the tremendous opportunities that my time at *KidScreen* has given me. I will be leaving this month to jump into the mix and answer a call to pursue kid's entertainment from your side of the business.

The ride here at *KidScreen* has been more incredible than words can say. Since my start nine years ago (thank you EM.TV for buying my first ad!) I've discovered myself and grown right along with the business. Being a part of this community, and indeed this company, has opened many doors that have given me unparalleled opportunity to build my confidence, business savvy, analytical skills and leadership. And wow, didn't I have a whole lot of fun along the way.

Thank you to all of you who have supported me through the years with your time and expertise, advertising dollars, information, inspiration, friendship...and cocktails of course. Immeasurable, unforgettable and hopefully not over. You've taught me well and I hope to see many of you again in my next chapter.

There are a lot of things that I'm proud of – *KidScreen's* leadership position in the market, the growth and success of *KidScreen* Summit, the brand's unique ability to contextualize market intelligence in a fun way, the many partnerships and connections that we've been able to facilitate - but most of all, I am proud of the tremendous group of talented individuals that I've been lucky enough to laugh, learn & work with here. Thank you for your hard work and passion, for becoming my family, and for making me look so good!

*(And to one in particular, Jocelyn, Jocelyn...how far we've come together over nine years...if I had a mountain I would sing your name from the top of it!)*

Very fortunately for me, I still get to be in *KidScreen's* extended family as a reader & attendee now, so I will continue to be thankful for everything that Jocelyn, Myles, Diane, Russell, Jim and the whole KS team have planned to keep us all connected and in the loop. They are simply the very best at what they do. I've gotten a sneak peek at some of the surprises that lie ahead, and we can all expect great things...

Enjoy the issue and take care,

Donna MacNeil

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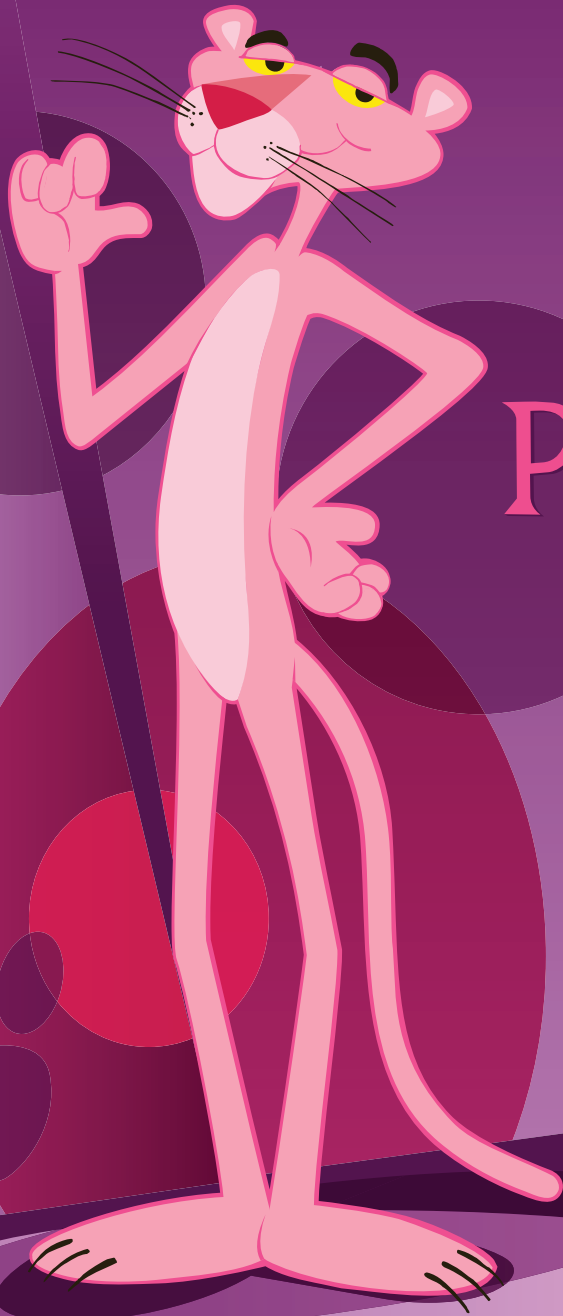
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*Creature Comforts* from Aardman joins Joost's roost as the web TV service readies for launch



up front



## JOOST JUICES UP WITH ANIMATION PARTNERS

by kate calder

**P**oised to give YouTube a run for its money, internet TV upstart Joost has hooked up with a couple of kids industry heavies in a bid to bolster its unique positioning and market edge. Unlike YouTube, which has been largely unsuccessful in its attempts to lure studios and prodcos onto its user-generated vehicle, Joost has included high-profile content and media companies in its mix right from inception.

The site soft-launched in January and is currently in a second invite-only beta phase. There are already 150 channels running, with content partners including Turner, Warner Bros., Sony Pictures Television, Sports Illustrated, NHL, Hasbro and Aardman Animations contributing from their libraries. And looking ahead,

the company has partnered with L.A.-based talent agency CAA to wrangle even more programming through its relationships with networks and studios.

For its part, Hasbro made the decision to hook up with Joost for channels dedicated to vintage *Transformers* and *G.I. Joe* episodes based on audience migration. "One of the biggest changes over the last several years, and it will continue to change, is how our content gets distributed and where our audience is," says Bill Bornson, head of programming at the toyco.

The schedules of Joost's other channels include a hefty amount of cartoons and animation, including *Aqua Teen Hunger Force* and *Robot Chicken* from Turner's Adult Swim network, episodes of classic *Spider-Man* from Sony and *Creature Comforts* from Aardman. So clearly there's an opportunity for animation producers with libraries that target a broad range of demographics.

And although Joost's content is adult-focused so far, the service is sure to eventually grab the attention of keen kid viewers—and advertisers eager to reach them. Robin Gladman, digital rights manager at Aardman, says his studio doesn't plan to add kids content to its Joost feed in the immediate future, but is certainly open to the idea if there seems to be a market demand for it in the space.

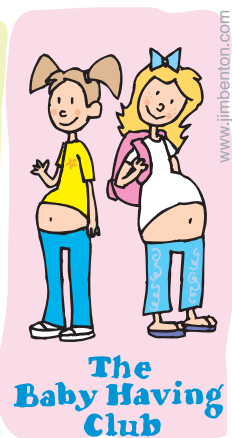
Although Gladman says Joost doesn't pay its partners for content, which is offered to viewers at no cost, the deals center around sharing ad revenues. He adds that Aardman has complete creative control over how its programming is presented on the dedicated channel and works together with Joost to determine where to insert ads. "We have some short-form content, so we have to be careful that the ads aren't too long, otherwise it could feel overcrowded," he explains.

Founded by Janus Friis and Niklas Zennström, the Scandinavian programming whizzes behind file-sharing program Kazaa and Skype, Joost's model has attracted US\$45 million in financing from independent capital firms and content owners such as CBS and Viacom. It has also brought in 32 advertisers to date, including Coca-Cola, Hewlett-Packard, Intel and Nike. **S**

### Roll the Cartoon

by jim benton

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# Prime property preview

## Let the Licensing Show deal-making begin...

by emily claire afan

### Disney tunes into TV

With the third *Pirates of the Caribbean* movie already in theaters and Pixar's *Ratatouille* ready to roll out on June 29, Disney Consumer Products is turning its attention to preschool at this year's show. New CGI series *My Friends Tigger & Pooh*, which



debuted on Playhouse Disney in May, promises to refresh the Pooh franchise for the toddler set. The division's EVP of global retail sales and marketing, Jim Fielding, says the domestic dance card is pretty much full, with a toy-led mass-market program scheduled to roll out this fall. And the plan is to expand into all major categories, including apparel, home décor and food, in spring 2008. However, Fielding says, the international team is still on the hunt for licensees in toys and apparel.

### Book-based films a focus at Universal

Universal Studios Consumer Products Group is prepping holiday 2008 release *The Tale of Despereaux* as its tentpole merch launch for the season. Based on a Newbery Medal-winning book by Kate DiCamillo about the journey of big-eared little mouse Despereaux Tilling and his affable rat pal Roscuro to rescue Princess Pea, the film is Universal's first foray into CGI. When it comes to translating the magical, fairytale-like story into product, VP of global business development Cindy Chang and VP of global marketing and brand management Debbie Luner expect the property to appeal primarily to tween girls. Right now, the licensee field is wide open, but Luner sees softline categories

such as apparel and accessories in the driver's seat, and says the holiday timing makes the property a good candidate for collectibles and gift merch.

Also new to Universal's lineup is *Coraline*. This darker yarn about a girl (voiced by Dakota Fanning) who steps through a door into a parallel world and then fights to return to her normal life marks another milestone as the studio's first CGI/stop-motion effort. The film should resonate with teens and tweens, and a mass-market licensing program planned around the film's Q4 2008 launch targets tween girls. Softline categories are leading the charge, and no deals have been inked yet.

In other news, USCPG has just appointed The Beanstalk Group to handle North American licensing programs for *Curious George* and *The Land Before Time*.

### Scholastic debuts toddler brand

Scholastic's publishing arm is launching an imprint designed to shepherd the under-three set through basic developmental phases. Seven Little Scholastic titles that teach kids colors, shapes, numbers and more will land at retail this summer. And as the

publishing effort is getting off the ground, Scholastic Media is prepping to move the fledgling brand into other product categories. SVP of marketing and consumer products Leslye Schaefer is taking it slow and views Licensing Show as a chance to introduce the property to potential partners and get their feedback. However, she does feel that early learning toys, room décor and home furnishings would provide a good start for a consumer products push.

*Word Girl*, the company's animated half-hour series about a female superhero who wards off villains with her word power, is debuting on PBS this September. Honing in on the importance of developing a rich vocabulary at a young age, the show for four- to 10-year-olds skews slightly girl. Schaefer aims to build the property's awareness, with the goal of launching apparel and accessories in time for back-to-school 2008.

### Discovery Kids now under Big Tent

With much of the buzz centering on its iconic Japanese import Domo, New York's Big Tent Entertainment has a few more irons in the fire. Just weeks before Discovery Communications announced

"Preview" continued on page 42



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# New retail concept lets kids pimp their rides

by emily claire afan

**I**nspired by the success of its partner, Build-A-Bear Workshop, toy car specialist Ridemakerz has steered the DIY retail model into a new pitstop-and-shop concept for kids. The company's first store opened for business in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina at the beginning of the month, and the experience it offers centers around customizable car construction.

For between US\$12 and US\$75, customers select from a range of body types (from monster trucks to licensed concept cars based on Ford and Dodge models) and then soup up the frame by adding sounds, a radio control option (a US\$25 upgrade), rims and a license plate number, all of which they assemble themselves in a timed pit-stop section of the store. They also get a code that they can enter online at [www.ridemakerz.com](http://www.ridemakerz.com) to add more upgrades to a digital version of their personalized model before it gets sent out to friends.

Ridemakerz has come a long way since Build-A-Bear initially invested in the venture in late 2005. The behind-the-scenes relationship has since expanded into a full-on operational partnership, giving the upstart company use of the Workshop's point-of-sales system and warehouse/distribution center.

Though cars tend to be a boy-skewing merch proposition, Ridemakerz CEO Larry Andreini says quite a few girls have been



Ridemakerz is planning to take its custom-car retail concept for a global spin

buying the product in Myrtle Beach, particularly the pink RZ Rascal model. People of all ages seem to be into the

concept, especially father-and-son duos looking for a bonding experience, but he says the sweet spot is still kids six to 12.

Andreini plans to open four more Ridemakerz locations across the US this year, the goal being to have 250 to 300 in operation by 2017. He's already fielded calls from parties interested in bringing franchises to the UK, Canada and France and definitely plans to roll the chain out worldwide. **S**

## Lambur to grow Lenz slate

**K**ids entertainment vet Joan Lambur is packing up her five-year-old distribution and licensing company Lambur & Associates and moving in with Toronto, Canada's Lenz Entertainment. In her new post as president of on-screen entertainment, Lambur plans to grow the prodco's development and distribution slate, which currently includes The Groggs' preschool puppet series *Nanalan'* and tween-skewing *Mr. Meaty*.

In addition to entertaining pitches from creatives and acquiring new series, Lambur will continue overseeing her former company's portfolio. As for new pick-ups, she's interested in animated series and the adult lifestyle programming populating the likes of HGTV, but hasn't set a quota. "I'm not trying to plug any holes; I'm always just looking for good projects," she explains. Lambur will also keep a foot in the licensing biz, and is managing all L&M activities for Lenz properties. She says she won't be cutting individual deals, but will be setting strategies and appointing agents where appropriate. **LC**

### Now Playing

**Jordan Sollitto** EVP of new initiatives and international licensing, Warner Bros. CP

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**Colleen Malone** (Tim O'Brien)

**Time After Time** (Frank Sinatra)

3:27

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# KS crystal ball likes Peanuts, Scholastic, Dora and T.M.X Elmo for LIMA wins

*I know everyone's looking forward to raising a glass to consumer products excellence at the LIMA Awards gala this month, but before heading down to New York, we thought it'd be fun to take a look at the field of nominees and see if we could ID some likely winners. Narrowing in on four key kids entertainment categories, here's how the wins would play out, according to more than 150 licensing execs we polled. JC*

## **Best Character Brand License of the Year** **Peanuts—United Media**

Also nominated are: Barbie in the 12 Dancing Princesses (Mattel), Care Bears (American Greetings/The Joester Loria Group), Clifford—Japan (Scholastic Entertainment/Dentsu) and Strawberry Shortcake (American Greetings/DIC).

## **Best Character Brand Licensee of the Year—Hard Goods**

### **Scholastic—It's Happy Bunny books**

Also nominated are: Dynacraft (Hot Wheels bike), Jakks Pacific (Barbie in the 12 Dancing Princesses dance mat and instructional video), Play Along (Care Bears plush) and

Playmates Toys (Strawberry Shortcake doll range).

## **Best Film, Television & Entertainment Brand License of the Year**

### **Dora the Explorer—Nickelodeon & Viacom Consumer Products**

Also nominated are: American Idol (FreemantleMedia Enterprises), Bratz (MGA Entertainment), Disney/Pixar Cars (The Walt Disney Company) and Thomas & Friends (HIT Entertainment).

## **Best Film, Television & Entertainment Brand Licensee of the Year—Hard Goods**

### **Fisher-Price—T.M.X. Elmo**



Industry money's on the latest Elmo i-plush

Also nominated: Bandai (Ben 10 toy line), Digital Blue (Disney digital cameras and accessories), Elizabeth Arden (Britney Spears Fantasy fragrance), Mattel (Disney/Pixar Cars Fast-Talkin' Lightning McQueen interactive toy).



## RED TAPE WATCH

### **Brit TV ad rules extend to print and web**

Last year's Ofcom restrictions that banned junk food commercials from appearing in or around any kids-targeted programming on UK terrestrial nets will now extend to print ads, posters, direct mail, email blasts, web ads and cinema commercials. The Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP), which wrote the non-broadcast advertising code, has confirmed that the extended rules will come into effect on July 1.

### **UK television industry holds brainstorming session**

Hosted by Broadcasting Minister Shaun Woodward and BAFTA, a who's who in UK children's entertainment got together at the end of April to discuss the state and future of kids television in the wake of the region's junk food ad ban. Attendee Julian Scott, head of children's programming at Coolabi Productions, says the group discussed long-term solutions such as tax incentives similar to those in Canada, which could increase exports and create jobs. Ofcom was also on-hand to present preliminary results of its review of children's broadcasting, the full version of which will be released this fall. One key discussion point focused on whether or not there's a need for legislation that further defines the rules and regs governing broadcasters' obligations to children's programming.

### **FTC muscles secrets out of food marketers**

The FTC issued a subpoena to 44 unidentified food, beverage and fast food marketers in an effort to dig up details on how they market to children. The info hunt includes traditional media targeting kids, product placement, viral and word-of-mouth marketing activities, campaigns directed to specific races, ethnicities and genders, and any information to support health claims such as "better for you." The federal register notice says the FTC will treat any data that's turned over in confidence, but a Senate report based on the findings is expected to lead to lawsuits charging that food companies are responsible for childhood obesity.





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Built around Nat Geo research, *Aloutah's* Arctic settings are up to factual spec



## What's developing in kids production

by jocelyn christie

### *Aloutah's* seeding shorts sprout a longer format

Much like the icebergs that pepper its backdrop, there's a lot going on beneath the surface of *Aloutah*, a new short series co-pro in the works at L.A.'s National Geographic Kids Entertainment and Paris, France-based Planet Nemo Productions.

On the content side of things, the 52 x two-minute project appears to be all about fast-paced slapstick comedy, with stories centering around a pair of mischievous Aleuth siblings who get into an avalanche of trouble in their extreme Northern environs. But like every Nat Geo production, it's been shaped and inspired by a hefty background paper prepared by the company's research department that delves into the geographic facts of life in the Arctic Circle.

And *Aloutah's* business model is just as carefully plotted. While the plan is to get the 2-D animated shorts to market quickly and sell them as TV interstitials, mobisodes and webtoons, this is just one phase of a bigger seeding and testing strategy. Planet Nemo got the ball rolling a few years ago when it started working with *Aloutah* creator Jean Vincent. In those early days, the property's cute graphic characters could have gone either way—preschool or seven to 12. The team decided to try the latter demo first, working up an edgier, gag-heavy online comic strip to generate kid feedback and test the viability of targeting an older viewer.

Planet Nemo hadn't counted on attracting the interest of top French publisher Bayard Jeunesse, which found the comic strip online and picked it up to run in its *D Lire* kids magazine. So with *Aloutah's* French audience building nicely, Planet Nemo started showing the property to potential international partners.

NGKE president Donna Friedman Meir had been looking for a project that could feed off the buzz generated by *March of the Penguins* and the anticipated momentum from another Arctic-set Nat Geo

film that's set to roll out this summer. She was also impressed with Planet Nemo's high-caliber track record and keen to find a way to work with the studio. *Aloutah* fit the bill perfectly.

Working with a budget between US\$250,000 and US\$275,000 per half hour, NGKE and Planet Nemo are currently looking for presales to send the shorts into production. Nat Geo is overseeing character development and writing, and has brought in Holly Hawkins (whose credits include *Rugrats*, *Totally Spies!* and *Skunk-Fu*) to do the scripts. Planet Nemo will handle all the design and animation work. Two shorts were completed at press time, with scripts locked for three more.

One of the wrapped eps starts with *Aloutah* borrowing a tusk from Ralph the walrus and pogo-ing all over his Arctic hood with MikMak while the hot sun beats down and melts much of the frozen terrain. In the end, they get stranded with Ralph on a tiny patch of ice, and when it dissolves, Ralph ends up in the water and *Aloutah* and MikMak have to find a new game.

Both Nat Geo and Planet Nemo (which retains distribution rights to French-speaking countries, Benelux and Asia) showed this finished ep to buyers at MIPTV in April, and interest was strong enough that the partners are starting to develop a 26 x half-hour series as well, using the shorts to inform the process. "What's wonderful about shorts is that each one is like a different experiment," says Friedman Meir. "So we think we'll learn a lot about which are the strongest characters, where the strongest comedy comes from, and how far we can push it editorially, and all of these lessons can be applied to the longer series." If everything proceeds as planned, the first 26 shorts will be delivered in November, and then the half-hour series should follow in early 2009.

"UpNext" continued on page 38



# The name game

## Deconstructing the fine art of kids show titling

by jocelyn christie

**W**ith so many shows competing for a finite number of kid eyeballs, it takes more than just good content to get them hooked these days. And one element that can help forge an instant connection—or not—is the title. It's often the first opportunity you have to convert potential viewers into actual viewers (think TV guides and on-screen listings), but ending up with a good one isn't as simple as it used to be.

In the good old days, producers typically only concerned themselves with clearing titles in the entertainment category because it wasn't naturally assumed that toys and merch would follow. But in the brave new world of brand-building, trademark issues are much more complex. A title has to be cleared for usage in every consumer products category it may potentially live in, and as Decode Entertainment partner Beth Stevenson puts it, "pretty much every word has been used in some context or another."

Because usage roadblocks crop up so frequently and legal services don't come cheap, most producers have adopted a tiered approach to the clearance process. Decode, for example, will start off by slapping a prospective title onto a script that's about to go through legal script clearance at a contracted law firm. Stevenson says this service costs about US\$400 and will yield a list of movie and TV series titles that are similar to the one floated, as well as ID'ing the ones that are most likely to prove contentious. The next step is an actual title search, which is also handled by out-of-house legals and can cost around US\$1100.

This is the phase that effectively put the kybosh on the original title of *Radio Free Roscoe* a few years ago. The show's creator had named the live-actioner *Radio Free Nutley* after the town where she grew up.



Decode's *Radio Free Nutley* relocated to Roscoe when it hit a sticky wicket in the title search phase

But there's only one Nutley in the world, and the New Jersey burg happens to be both Martha Stewart's hometown and the shooting location of *The Sopranos*. Besides the taint of its association with the renowned mob drama, Nutley was also the setting of an unflattering TV movie about Martha's life that had just aired to coincide

with the investigation into the infamous stock sale that landed her in jail.

Needless to say, the town was a little leery of media attention, and the local high school principal (who had to sign off because Decode's show was set in Nutley High) absolutely refused to waive his right to sue if he felt the project painted his institution in an





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unsavory light. Numerous phone calls were placed, but he wouldn't budge, so Decode cut its losses and went with Roscoe instead.

Assuming a title doesn't fall prey to a similar fate, the final gauntlet it has to run is a trademark search, which is at least double the cost of a title search and looks for similarly named consumer products in the international marketplace. This is where Little Airplane Productions' original title concept for *Oobi* was grounded for good; *Piyo*, as it turns out, is a well-known Italian brand of jeans.

Sometimes, hitting a hurdle in clearance can be the catalyst that leads to a much stronger title. In Little Airplane's case, for example, the double O's in *Oobi* happen to mirror the eyeball accessories that are such a big part of the handpuppet show. "I find it can be a blessing to have to dig deeper for the name of a show," says the studio's founder and president Josh Selig.

Co-productions are notorious breeding grounds for titling problems; as each partner



With its eyeball-esque double O's, *Oobi* is the perfect title, but it wasn't Little Airplane's first choice

brings different territory-specific issues and sensibilities to the table, disagreements often abound. "All our shows are co-productions with at least three partners," says Marathon Media GM David Michel. "And the title is so key to every single one that you end up on a middle ground that

kind of works, but isn't great." When the company was developing boys action toon *Team Galaxy*, for example, Marathon presented about five or six much stronger title options, but the partners couldn't agree on them and had to move on to the B-list.

International sensibilities have just as much influence on indie projects as they do on co-productions, and it's wise to do a survey of close contacts in all the major sales regions to suss out potential "lost in translation" issues before a show and its title get too far down the pipeline. Decode preschool toon *Frammy's Feet* was called *Fanny's Feet* when it was first introduced to buyers outside of Canada, but the sales team hadn't counted on the pitch generating as much laughter as it did in the UK, where the word "fanny" is slang for vagina.

Speaking of translation, foreign languages must also be taken into consideration by any producer looking to do business internationally. Most broadcasters will try their best to stay true to the essence of a show when they translate it for airing in their territories, but titles need to be so short that it's often difficult to meet that goal effectively.

Marathon got around the issue with *Totally Spies!* by keeping the title intact in English and then tacking on a tagline that broadcasters could translate to localize the show. (So in France, it was *Totally Spies! Espion de choque*.) One territory that isn't open to this kind of compromise is Italy, where all shows are given brand-new titles in Italian, at the sole discretion of the broadcaster.

"Titling" continued on page 37

## OTX taps the target with title studies

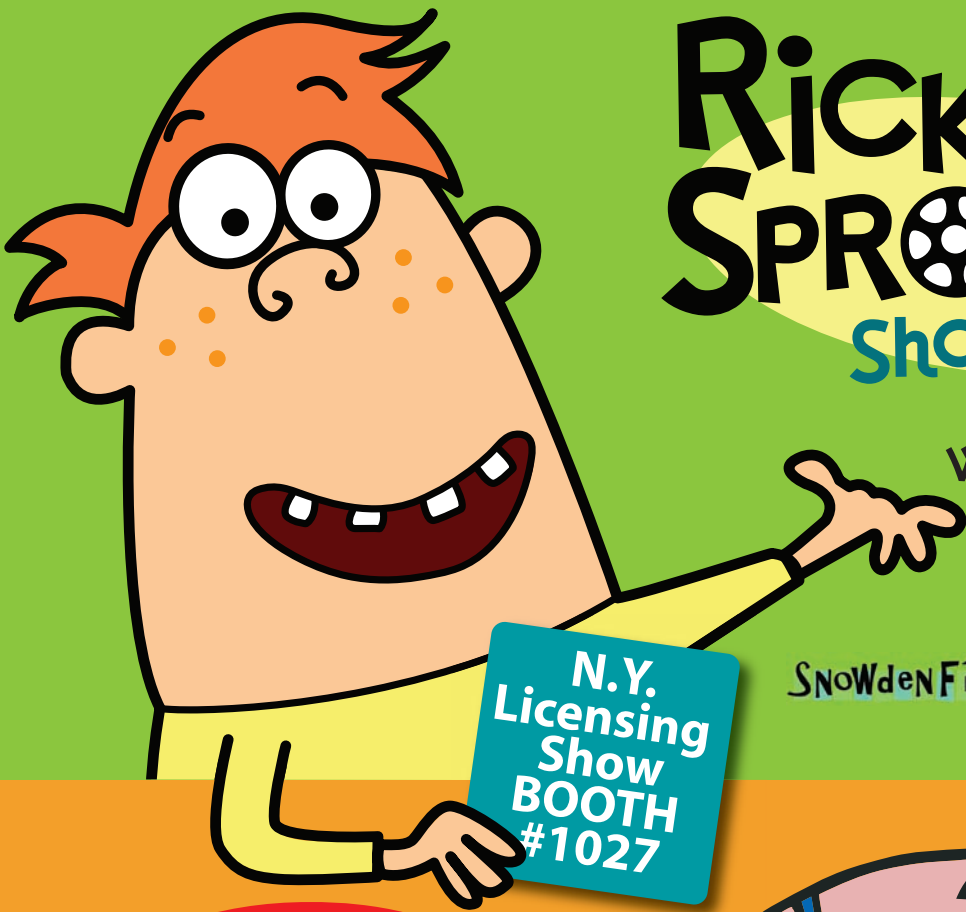
**S**ome producers and broadcasters like to go right to the audience to test their show titles, and OTX Research has got 'em covered. This L.A.-based outfit has worked with all the major US kidnets and studios, and regularly conducts title studies for TV shows and movie projects through online polls with kids to find out which titles stick and which ones fall short.

OTX's team approaches their surveys in many ways, depending on what kind of info a client wants to dig into. But a typical survey starts by presenting the poll group with a list of titles and asking them to rank the choices. Then they may be given a description of the series and/or shown a brief clip and asked whether the title up for evaluation increases or decreases their interest. Sometimes OTX even asks them to brainstorm some potential title ideas of their own.

Sample sizes range between 450 and 900 kids, broken down into subgroups by age (six to eight, nine to 11, and 12 to 14) and then again by gender. And depending on headcount and how much feedback the client wants, the cost can run anywhere from US\$6,000 to more than US\$10,000.

MD and EVP of media and entertainment insights Bruce Friend says OTX's surveys are conducted with sample companies that run web communities for kids and parents, many of which have reward systems in place to incentivize kids to participate in the polls in exchange for points that can be redeemed for cool stuff. The sites are all COPPA-compliant, so up to age 12, parental permission is a must, and parents control any points earned.

All in all, OTX has access to between three and four million kid respondents and works through local partners in international territories including the UK, Germany, France, Spain, Australia and Japan, and the company is working hard to widen that footprint. It has also recently expanded into mobile and video games, which is now its fastest-growing segment besides TV. **JC**



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# Got it Need it

Profiles in programming strategy

## Lionsgate sticks to box office and brands

**AS** shelf space for younger-skewing home entertainment product continues to shrink, kids IP owners may be having a tougher time locking down deals in this tentpeg category these days. Lionsgate's EVP of family entertainment Ken Katsumoto is still bullish on the market, but has shifted his acquisitions strategy to bring it more in line with retail demand at both the sell-in and sell-through levels.

"VOD and other delivery platforms are evolving, but evolving slowly, so retail is still the category's main distribution driver," he says. "I'd say it's responsible for about 95% of sales." But retailers are all about brand recognition now, so what's working best for Lionsgate in the kids space are well-established brands and properties that have successful theatrical film runs in their pockets.

In this latter vein, Katsumoto points to *Happily N' Ever After* as a recent success story that shows how well the strategy can work. The CGI revisionist fairytale from Vanguard Animation and Germany's BFC grossed US\$16 million at box office in the US. But the home entertainment range had already done 20% more business at press time—and it'd only been out at retail for a few weeks.

In terms of brands, Bratz and the Marvel franchise are two of Lionsgate's strongest performers; in fact, Katsumoto says each of the three Marvel movies that have been released has sold through more than 500,000 units so far. The series is the product of a deal Lionsgate and Marvel inked to co-produce up to eight direct-to-DVDs together. *The Avengers* kicked things off in early 2006, and next up is *Dr. Strange* in August 2007. Katsumoto is about to send three more into production in the coming months.

If there's a softer segment of the kids home entertainment market right now, it's TV episode compilations, says Katsumoto. He says episodic releases aren't often able to create the kind of in-store excitement retailers are looking for now. And on the

consumer front, these products have lost ground with older kids, who are moving on to gaming and social networking forms of entertainment at an earlier and earlier age every year.

"Obviously, we still believe in the episodic market," says Katsumoto, "so what we're doing to counteract this softness is

turning every three stories into a movie." The specific details about how this tactic would play out and what it would involve in terms of after-the-fact production work to create a seamless merge of the eps were still being worked out at press time, but Katsumoto does plan to apply this new model to select properties in the Lionsgate portfolio in the coming season. "This strategy tends to lead to a bigger presence at retail, and therefore, greater viability," he says.

Katsumoto's plan for licensing new properties over the next year will continue to be shaped by this dual focus on theatrically led properties and brands with built-in audiences. Pitches that hail from the TV side of the business really need to come to the table with a strong broadcast partner that is willing to pitch in and promote the home entertainment release. But the ideal proposition is an IP that has a TV run, a theatrical run and spe-

cial DVD runs. Basically, he's looking for anything that has the potential to crack the top five in DVD sales.

In terms of deal parameters, Lionsgate's contracts tend to cover all home entertainment rights "known and unknown," and this clause blankets existing digital platforms including VOD and broadband, as well as any other yet-to-come technologies that could be in the offing. Katsumoto says none of these emerging media are monetizing much of anything yet, and most astute producers know that tying up these rights with other partners (such as a broadcaster) can kill a potential home entertainment deal, so it hasn't really been much of an issue during negotiations. **JC**



Proof that the dual strategy works: *Happily N' Ever After* is a month into its DVD run and has already bested its box office by 20%, and Lionsgate's Marvel direct-to-DVDs have sold more than 500,000 copies apiece

TELE IMAGES

# Adiboo Adventure

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## Iconicles wins Beeb nod with organic digital asset

England's pubcaster is a tough sell at the best of times. But with CITV out of the commissioning picture, it's no exaggeration to say that every pre-school pitch in the international marketplace is clamoring to get through the door at the BBC right now. And this market reality makes the recent greenlight that Create Media Ventures and phuuz entertainment scored for *Iconicles* that much more impressive.

The 26 x 22-minute project was competing with upwards of 600 other hopefuls for CBeebies creative director Michael Carrington's seal of approval, and according to Greg Payne, chairman and director of Foot-hill Entertainment (which represents *Iconicles* for phuuz and has been integrally involved in the development process), the tipping point that pushed the property to the front of the pack was that it provides kids with both a visual language they can use to express themselves and an online platform for doing so.

The property targets kids ages four to six and revolves around a cast of really strong iconic images of various animals, bugs and other types of critters. They all live in different parts of the digital



An elaborate character collection system will drive the online component of *Iconicles*, and this key selling point helped woo CBeebies' Carrington

Iconicle world (i.e. Rhino, Hippo and Elephant are denizens of the Wild, Wild Wilderness), and each group has a lead character around whom the action and stories revolve.

In terms of structure, *Iconicles* is a variety show, so in every episode there will be a nine-minute story (broken up into three parts), a couple of sketch comedy vignettes, an interactive game or activity and song segments. All the components revolve around an age-relevant theme like cooperation/sharing or frustration/self-control, and they'll be woven together by a live host. Leo is the only human on Earth who knows about the Iconicle world, and he has built a special Iconi-Screen (kind of like the interactive thingie Tom Cruise used in *Minority Report* to track future crimes) to keep tabs on all the various creature groups.

*Iconicles* will also live on the web as a virtual collecting game that's a cross between Pokémon and Neopets. The icons are at the heart of the website's reward system, and kids can earn new ones by playing games. Then they can be grouped together to generate video stories that yield *Iconicles* cards (which need virtual pet-type nurturing) once they're played. Similar interfaces for mobile phones and interactive TV platforms will give away codes that kids can then redeem for icons on the website. Besides this collection function, the online hub is designed to let kids create their own *Iconicles*, as well as record and share jokes, songs and stories.

Carrington plans to add the show to his fall 2008 schedule, so Create, phuuz and the BBC production team will be working full steam ahead over the summer to find a host, write the scripts and nail down the animated backgrounds and live sets. The bulk of the work needs to be done in the UK, as per the terms of the commission, so Create will take the lead on sourcing and coordinating everything. As far as rights go, BBC Worldwide has a first option on international distribution, but the subsidiary hadn't exercised it yet at press time. **JC**

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# Sales Roundup

Program	Broadcaster	Style/Format	Demo	Producer/Distributor
Digimon (season 5)	Jetix on Toon Disney (US)	2-D/48 x half hours	boys 6 to 12	Toei Animation
Dive Olly Dive!	E-Vision (UAE)	CGI/52 x 11 minutes	preschool	Mike Young Productions, Flying Bark Productions, Ki.Ka, ARD, Telegael, GDC/Taffy Entertainment
SamSam Entertainment		CGI/52 x seven minutes	four to six	Bayard Jeunesse Animation/Taffy
Pet Alien (season two)		CGI/52 x 13 minutes	six to 11	Mike Young Productions, MoonScoop, Telegael, Europool/Taffy Entertainment
ToddWorld (season two)		2-D/39 x 11 minutes	preschool	Mike Young Productions, Discovery Kids, Dataquest, Telegael/Taffy Entertainment
Fantastic Four	GMTV (UK)	2-D/52 x half hours	six to 11	MoonScoop Productions, Marvel Comics, Cartoon Network Europe/Taffy Entertainment
Iron Kid	Kids' WB! (US)	CGI/26 x half hours	kids	BRB Internacional, Screen 21, Manga Entertainment, Designstorm, Daewon Media, TVE/BRB
The Magic Roundabout	Nickelodeon UK	CGI/52 x 11 minutes	preschool	Films Action/Ellipsanime
The Mr. Men Show	Cartoon Network (US) Five (UK)	2-D/52 x 11 minutes	four to seven	Chorion
This is Daniel Cook This is Daniel Cook/Emily Yeung	C4U (South Korea) Discovery Latin America Rainbow Television Corporation (various African and Middle Eastern territories)	LA/65 x half hours LA/130 x half hours	preschool	marblemedia/Picture Box Distribution
Timeblazers	Nine Network (Australia) Log On Editora (Brazil)	LA/40 x half hours	seven to 11	CCI Entertainment

## "Titling" continued from page 32

Another way around the translation issue is to choose a title that doesn't really mean anything in any language, like Aardman/Decode copro *Chop Socky Chooks*. It's just silly and fun to say, but there's another element that comes into play, says Cartoon Network Europe's VP of original series and development, Daniel Lennard. "Adults never say it right the first few times, but kids get it immediately, and there's valuable cachet in them feeling like they own it." For its part, Cartoon almost never changes creators' titles because, as Lennard puts it, "creative originality will always transcend a title when it comes to connecting with viewers." (He points to *The Simpsons* and *South Park* as two prime examples.) But he is careful to make sure the title is pronounced the way it looks because kids are still learning to read.

In terms of other general titling guidelines, gobbledy-gook words, wordplay and alliteration, and simple, literal treatments




Marathon tried a localizable tagline tactic to keep the translators away from its slightly ironic English-language title *Totally Spies!*

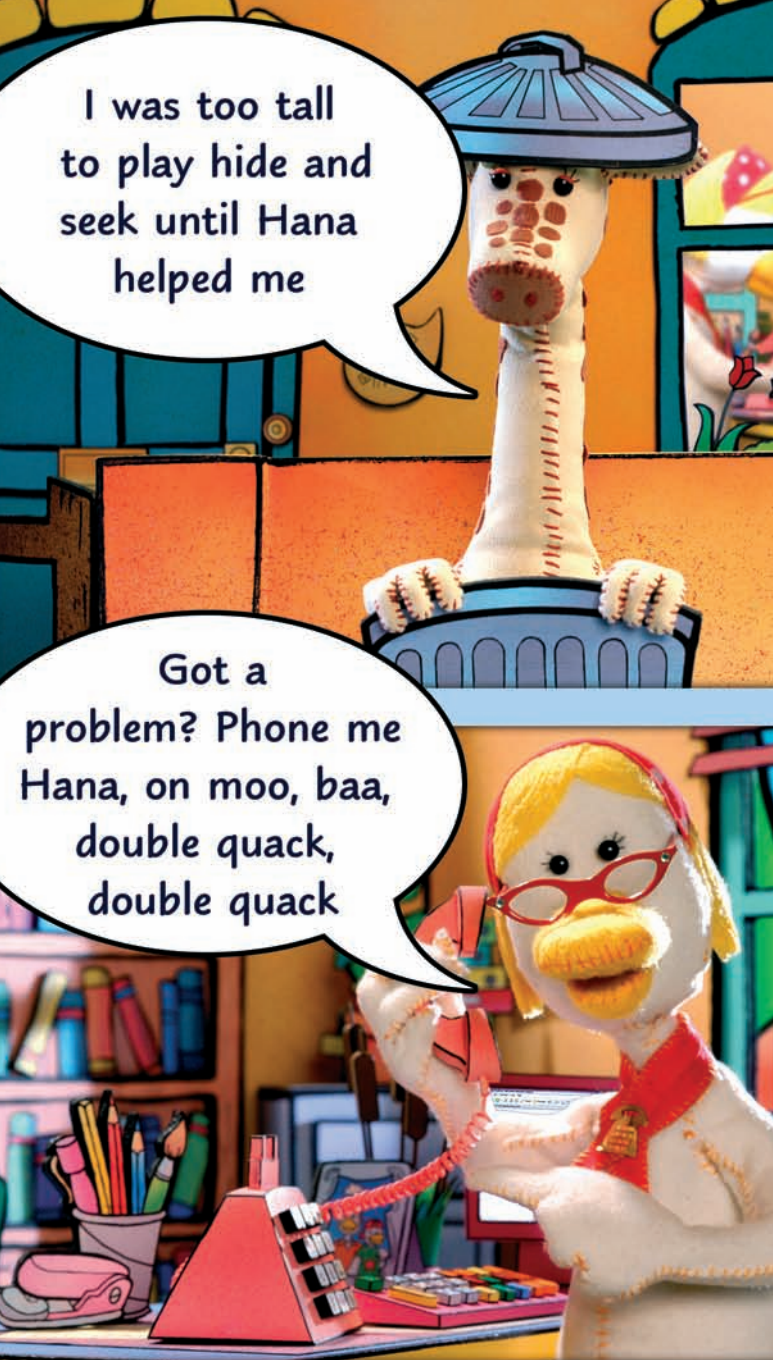
tend to work best for younger kids, but it's important to keep in mind that these titles also need to appeal to parents by sounding safe and beneficial. Boys action seems to stick to straight-forward and dynamic wording, and some players feel that there's a little room for irony with tween

fare. Decode's Stevenson notes that titles with "robot" or "alien" in them are really difficult to clear legally, and Marathon's Michel adds any words to do with space concepts to that list.

It's best to steer clear of words with double meanings, as well as hip language and references to current trends, especially with concepts targeting younger viewers. "Preschool is an evergreen area," says Little Airplane's Selig, "so you want something that will resonate with kids who are in the same age group five or 10 years down the road."

And at the end of the day, it's important to keep in mind that a show's title is part of the overall content package, and great core content can overcome a lot. "The truth is that I think you could have a show with an awful title, but if it's a great show, kids will find it," says Little Airplane's Selig. "A title is like a promo or billboard—it may bring them in, but it's not going to keep them watching." 





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S4/C rhyngwladol international



"UpNext" continued from page 29

### Taiwan's Gamania leads *Hero: 108* story development

Mike Young Productions is harkening back to animation's heyday by adopting a storyboard-led writing model for its new boys action-comedy co-pro *Hero: 108*. The 52 x 11-minute Flash toon originated in Taiwan as a concept worked up by the development team at Gamania Digital Entertainment, Asia's largest publisher of MMOGs. With exec production help from Radar Cartoons' Rita Street, the game studio is shouldering some pre-pro duties, including mapping out a storyboard for each episode as a first step in the narrative development process. Co-exec producer Kent Redeker will extract first-draft scripts from the boards and fine-tune from there.

The over-arching story, geared to the six to 11 set, is loosely based on an ancient Chinese novel called *Water Margin*, which details the trials and tribulations of 108 rebel bandits fighting against the corrupt rulers of the Song Dynasty. GDE's modern version of the epic centers around 14-year-old Lin Chung (a.k.a. Panther Eye), one of 108 kid defenders trying to end a conflict between humans and animals in a hidden kingdom. Standing in their way is a villain named High Roller, who uses his ability to communicate with the animals to try and dominate the human race. Each ep plays out a new chapter in this struggle for power, as well as spotlighting one of the heroes.

All of the show's visual elements are uniquely Asian-flavored, and GDE worked up several short animation sequences that



*Hero: 108's* stand-out Asian aesthetic and gaming roots attracted Cartoon Network International, which signed on to co-produce in less than three months

helped draw in MYP and co-producing broadcasters Telegael and Cartoon Network International, which has picked up rights for all its worldwide territories. *Hero: 108* is budgeted on the high side for Flash at just over US\$350,000 per half hour, but MYP partner and co-CEO Bill Schultz explains that 17 language tracks will be produced right off the bat. The show is due to wrap up in time for a Q4 2008 rollout, and MYP is actively scouting for presales. **N**

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Lego incorporated 28 fan designs into this train set sold at US retail last year



# USER-GENERATED PRODUCT?

## IT'S A BRAVE NEW WORLD FOR OWNERS OF COMMUNITY-DRIVEN IP

by lana castleman

Translating fan  
ardor for UGC into  
licensed goods  
could deepen the  
brand connection

Unless you spent 2006 literally under a rock or holed up in a Tibetan retreat, it was impossible to miss the advent of user-generated content in the kids and adult consumer space. Thanks to the likes of YouTube and user-friendly video editing software, millions of people morphed from content fans into creators seemingly overnight, churning out their takes on beloved animated

TV and film properties and posting them online for the world to see.

Eventually that keenness to interact with and interpret IP will filter down into the physical realm. Licensors will have to confront the need to translate those fan desires into consumer products, while maintaining some semblance of control over their brands and copyrights. It's early days yet, but some are on the path to doing it already.

Certainly the idea of enabling user-generated content has hit the mainstream in programming circles. The notion is that fans are doing it already, so why not provide them with access to select digital assets of the property and let them have at it, so to speak, in order to keep them connected to your brand and website.

Kidnets such as Canada's Teletoon have run successful promotions based on this line of thought. The net received more than 290,000 entries for a 2006 contest in which kids created their own animated shorts using interstitial characters the Zimmer Twins for the chance to see their mini-toons on TV. And US giant Nickelodeon is getting into the game with its just-launched ME:TV block and upcoming series *iCarly*. Even notorious copyright-hawk Lucasfilm opened up the Star Wars vault last month and made UG-ready movie clips available to fans for the first time on the property's newly revamped website.

On the flip side, manufacturing physical product based on IP-centered user-generated content is a tricky proposition. Every SKU, by its very nature, would be a one-off, making it impossible to achieve any kind of economy of scale and enter the mass market. And it might never work for large, long-established properties that simply have too much to lose in letting any possibly inappropriate fan-designed product into the market.

Then again, the rewards in terms of consumer loyalty can more than make up for the risk. While it isn't dealing in entertainment-driven properties yet, Lego has been promoting user-generated product for the past two years via its legofactory.com website. As part of a promotion initially, the toyco set up a consumer-friendly

"UGP" continued on page 44



"Preview" continued from page 22

the closure of its 103 US mall-based retail outlets in mid-May, Big Tent signed on as the State-side licensing agency for Discovery Kids and the net's Ready Set Learn! preschool block. Partner and chief marketing officer Rich Maryyanek and his team will be seeking to promote the existing range of DK products, which includes the Discovery Star Theater Home Planetarium and Discovery StickerMaker. And the company will be licensing Ready Set Learn! as a brand, as well as singling out a few individual shows, particularly newcomer *Wilbur*. Big Tent is on the hunt for partners in music, toys, plush, board games, apparel and fashion accessories, novelties, household items, social expressions, paper products, video games, publishing and mobile entertainment.

## Nick relaunches Neopets

With almost 140 million online users adopting virtual Scorchios, JubJubs and Kacheeks, Nickelodeon & Viacom Consumer Products has decided it's time to bring Neopets back into the world of retail. Limited product has been available at specialty in the two years since Viacom purchased the online pet portal, but a mass program is now in the works, says president Leigh Anne Brodsky. Targeting preteens and teens, Neopets merch should start rolling out in 2008, with plush, accessories, apparel, electronics, video games, stationery and books driving the program. Brodsky says NVCP is still looking for partners in these categories, with the exception of books, which will be handled by Random House.

New Muppet Abby Cadabby may link up with Zoe and Rosita for group licenses soon



## Paramount comes to the show with its licensing back in-house

Newly minted Paramount Licensing is cutting its teeth in the kids sector on a full-blown program for the February 2008 release *The Spiderwick Chronicles*. "It's the most merchandisable film that Paramount has produced in a long time," says Michael Bartok, EVP of licensing for the new division that was created in May when Paramount took licensing duties back from sister company Nickelodeon & Viacom Consumer Products.

Bartok is banking on the film's cast of creatures, magic-laced storyline and real-kid protagonists to propel merch sales. He says his L.A.-based division is on the verge of announcing licensees that will handle toys and interactive games for the movie based on Holly Black and Tony Diterlizzi's best-selling children's book series. And he's heading into Licensing Show with North American publishing (Simon & Schuster), greeting cards/party supplies (American Greetings), cake-decorating products (DecoPac) and calendars (Mead Westvaco) sewn up.

## Abby Cadabby enchants Sesame Street

For the first time in 13 years, Sesame Workshop has introduced a new Muppet to the Street. Abby Cadabby, a fairy-godchild-in-training, started appearing in *Sesame Street* eps towards the end of last season. And come July, she's making her consumer products debut via a retail exclusive at JCPenney. Dolls from Gund and a clothing line by Children's Apparel Network will form the centerpiece of the seed program. And heading into fall, master toy licensee Fisher-Price will launch Abby items at mass retail, joined by Random House (books) and American Greetings (stationery). VP and GM Maura Regan says the Workshop is relying on goods from its key licensees right now while seeking out more retail relationships for the Abby program. She also hints that Abby and lead female Muppets Zoe and Rosita could be grouped as a "girl-power threesome" for CP purposes, opening up new licensee opportunities and allowing existing licensees to hone in on girl consumers.

## Granada Ventures aims to expand US reach

London, England's Granada Ventures has the US consumer market in its crosshairs, and recently appointed VP of licensing Paula Miller will be working from its L.A. office to get the plan underway. Miller comes to Granada with 15 years of experience in the licensing industry, having worked as a consultant and executive producer at Media Home Entertainment, as well as doing stints at BKN, Eicon Communications and Golden Books Entertainment Group. In her new position, Miller will be focusing on launching preschool property Pocoyo in the US.

As for business in the UK, director of licensing Katie Foster is looking to build out a consumer products program for preschool series *Numberjacks*. A master toy licensee is at the top of her list, with partners secured for greeting cards, dinnerware, party goods and puzzles.

## 4kids goes literary with Nate the Great

Well-known for its boys action properties, 4Kids has picked up licensing rights to Nate the Great—Marjorie Weinman Sharmat's best-selling story and activity book series about the adventures of a curious kid detective. A TV show of the same name is set to bow on the PBS Kids Go! block in September 2008, but 4Kids is leaning towards establishing a program based on Nate as a book property first. An early publishing rollout is planned for fall 2008, and the company is currently on the hunt for toy, apparel and video game partners to launch product at mass retail in spring 2009.

4Kids is also getting down to the business of finding soft goods, video games, publishing, collectible figures, novelty,

consumer electronics and mobile licensees for its premiere multi-platform property, Chaotic. The 2-D animated series bowed on 4Kids TV in the US and on Teletoon in Canada earlier this year, and subsidiary TC Digital Games was just rolling out Chaotic collectible trading cards at press time. The property's sweet spot is boys ages nine to 14, and 4Kids is planning a specialty retail launch catering to that demo for fall 2008.

### Fox monkeys with intergalactic CGI flick

With *The Simpsons Movie* heading to theaters next month, Twentieth Century Fox Licensing & Merchandising is shifting its focus to animated newcomer *Space Chimps*. The adventure-comedy CGI pic is about a circus primate who leads a mission to outerspace and crashlands with his crew in a new world and is slated for a summer 2008 release. A corresponding boy-oriented merch program for the four to 11 set is in need of partners to cover off toys (particularly plush), back-to-school goods, health & beauty, publishing and room décor, says VP of domestic licensing Michael Peikoff. Product rollout will be in line with movie merch SOP, landing four to six weeks prior to the pic's release at mid-tier and mass-market outlets in the US.

### Super BadGuy to the rescue?

Though American Greetings Properties will be shining the spotlight on Sushi Pack, which debuted at last year's show, SVP of consumer products Tamra Knepper says the division will also be introducing upcoming series *Super BadGuy* to prospective partners. Still in early development, the show takes place in a town overpopulated with superheroes and villains, where protagonist Super BadGuy can't ever catch a break. Knepper is currently in negotiations with production partners, and she'll be looking for non-traditional licensees to head up a mass-market program planned for 2009. Toys, apparel, publishing, video games, accessories and home entertainment for kids four to eight are at the top of the list.

### Sony forecasts a food front headed to your area

Sony Pictures Consumer Products is concentrating its Licensing Show efforts on Sony Pictures Imageworks' 2009 CGI feature *Cloudy With a Chance of Meatballs*. Based on the Judi Barrett children's book of the same name, the movie revolves around an eccentric young inventor who develops a machine to make food grow in the atmosphere, which produces the likes of spaghetti tornadoes. Juli Boylan, SVP of consumer products, says she'll be talking to the usual suspects to lock down apparel and toys deals

for product aimed at six- to 12-year-olds. And with such a food-centric story to play up, you can also expect Sony to have some fun with edible goods.

### Entertainment Rights swings in with Classic Media

Expect a big combined booth for Entertainment Rights at the show in the wake of its recent acquisition of Classic Media. This year, George of the Jungle celebrates his 40th with a new series launching on Cartoon Network this fall. *George* also has placement on Teletoon (Canada), Nickelodeon UK and Disney Channel (Latin America). In terms of licensing, Nicole Blake, SVP of marketing at Classic Media, says the plan is to appeal to tech-savvy kids first via [www.georgeofthejungle.tv](http://www.georgeofthejungle.tv) and recruit

Jungle Maniacs to act as ambassadors for the show. Then the next step will be to follow up with a tech-based consumer products line, bolstered by back-to-school goods and costumes, for a fall 2008 mass retail rollout.

### Cookie Jar bows new preschool

Cookie Jar Entertainment has a new property on its roster for the under-fives. Preschool series *Will & Dewitt* is slated to air on Kids' WB! in the US and on YTV in Canada this fall, and its premise is all about encouraging kids to try new things. Aimed at the two to five set, the program will offer up licensing opportunities for all key consumer products categories, including toys, apparel and publishing. The mass-market program, led by toys, will roll out in 2009.

### Taffy Entertainment takes on Geronimo Stilton

Though Taffy's booth will primarily push Growing Up Creepie, Code Lyoko and Hero: 108, president of worldwide marketing and consumer products Cynthia Money says partners will also get a sneak-peek at the company's newest acquired property, Geronimo Stilton. A deal inked with Italy's Atlantica Entertainment has given Taffy the greenlight to oversee a licensed merch program and a new animated TV series based around the best-selling book-based property. Though still in its early stages, the new series is a co-production between Atlantica, 9 Story Entertainment and MoonScoop and should go to air in 2009. Money expects to launch a full-blown, worldwide licensing program six to nine months after the show's launch and is looking at video game, apparel, toys and home décor for the seven to 10 demo. **N**



Fox touches down with *Space Chimps* (top), while prospective partners will get a peek at AGP's *Super BadGuy*





"UGP" continued from page 41

digital design program and invited Lego fans of all ages to make up their own brick sets. These designs were put to a vote on the web hub, and the top 10 got incorporated into three packaged sets sold through the company's direct retail channels, lego.com and its catalogue service.

According to Lego Systems director of brand relations, Michael McNally, Lego has since expanded the capabilities of the design program so that it now lets users choose from some 764 (and counting) styles of Lego bricks to build their own Lego kits and, most importantly, purchase their creations. "It's moved us from being a company with 100 product designers to involving anyone who can build," he says. Also, once the designs are uploaded, other members of the Lego Factory community can view, vote on and even buy them. As the number of uploads approaches 200,000, McNally admits that not every user-generated kit makes it into the physical world, but he says the design-to-purchase ratio is improving.

Along with the complicated back-end fulfillment process that comes with letting fans make and order their own designs, there's been a learning curve in terms of how to price the product. In the early days, says McNally, each digital design palette represented an assorted bag of bricks. Users would often pull bricks from several palettes and then balk at the US\$300 price tag, not realizing they would have to buy the whole bag just to get one piece. Lego then moved to making more and more bricks available for individual purchase, driving down the costs of the finished product.

The plan moving forward is to delve deeper into niche groups in the Lego fan community to create themed design palettes and, eventually, themed retail kits using fan designs. So far, the company has started by reaching out to Lego train fans. Ten were invited to submit digital designs, and the resulting retail set that launched last year enabled the construction of 28 fan-generated models.

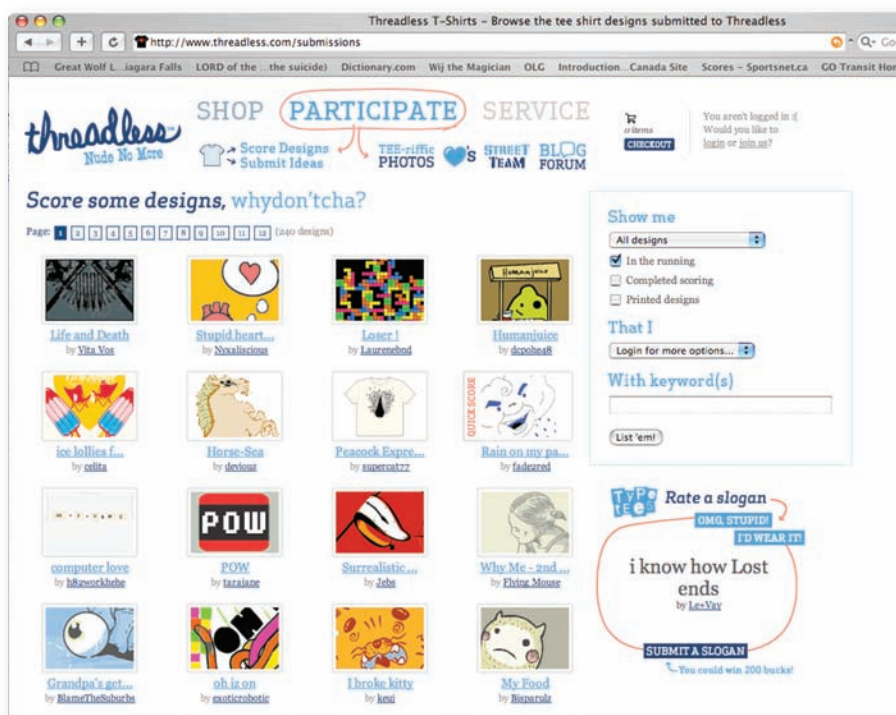
Of course, not all IP owners have the resources of a large toy company to throw behind their efforts. But smaller licensors such as New York's Big Tent Entertainment are betting the same type of community drive to shape the brand will help their growing digital properties make the product leap. After all, as CEO Rich Collins explains, these IPs come with ready-made consumer bases that support and feel a sense of ownership towards the characters. Representing Japanese internet icon Domo, which has inspired some 400,000 fan-established sites and countless user-generated videos, the licensing and marketing agency is planning on integrating fan creations into its licensed goods offering.

At the beginning of the month, Big Tent opened up web hub www.domonation.com to serve as the jumping-off point for all things Domo. The site features community-inspiring basics such

as regular contests, digital assets and news. The contests and community voting features will figure most heavily into the creation of user-generated product. Plans haven't been finalized, but Collins intends to incorporate fan creations into DVD and publishing releases. For example, on DVDs for the upcoming Domo series, one episode out of five could be culled from the cream of the user-generated video crop, while a book comprised entirely of fan stories could work at retail.

While Big Tent hasn't confirmed plans along these lines, there are also other UG-friendly categories popping up. Manufacturing fan-designed t-shirts, comics or posters through an online store wouldn't be a stretch. Online services such as zazzle.com have been offering customized apparel for several years now, and in the adult space, there are a few user-designed t-shirt e-tailers cropping up, notably threadless.com. Community also drives this site, where members upload their t-shirt

Online retailers such as threadless.com, which puts user-generated designs to a vote, may point the way for IP owners looking hard at trying UG product



designs and others vote. The winners are then made available for purchase.

And then there's also the possibility of creating a hybrid licensing program. Big Tent has forged several traditional licenses for Domo, including a master toy deal with Deerfield Beach, Florida-based Play Along Toys. At this stage, the toyco isn't contemplating any kind of one-off strategy. But VP of marketing Susan Evans says the plan is to launch with toys that let Domo fans continue to manipulate him as they see fit. "We don't want to inhibit their passion for the character," she says. So the toyco's putting three sizes of unadorned Domo plush into specialty retail this summer that fans can dress up and pose—a make-your-own play pattern, or in digispeak, a user-generated experience. How very old/new school.

# DCP turns to gold for fall Princess line

Looking to build on annual global retail sales that totalled US\$3.4 billion last year, Disney Consumer Products is taking a new tack with the Princess brand this fall. Instead of focusing its key retail theme on one character, as it did last year with Ariel from *The Little Mermaid*, the licensor is grouping all six princesses together under a gold-hued umbrella theme called Season of Enchantment.

According to VP of girls franchise management Kathy Franklin, DCP consumer research conducted last year found that US moms see the princess characters as well-mannered, perseverant, kind and compassionate role models for their daughters. And so the brand team set about trying to imbue product with those attributes. "We thought we could take the idea of princesses with hearts of gold and make it into real product," she explains.

So in addition to new DVD entertainment bowing in September—*Disney Princess: Enchanted Tales, Follow Your Dreams* features the first new *Sleeping Beauty* animation since the original film—retail shelves will start glittering with gold-and-pink products pulled from all Princess categories in August.

Leading the charge are four key items. Mattel has created a Magical Wand *Sleeping Beauty* doll (US\$19.99) with a dress that physically rotates and can change from blue to pink to gold with the wave of a wand accessory. The toyco is also producing a large-scale pink-and-gold castle (US\$99) that accommodates 11.5-inch fashion dolls.

Meanwhile role-play licensee CDI has created an enchanted throne and a magical talking vanity. Both contain secret compartments that can only be opened with a matching wand, and either



Come August, all six Disney princesses will be showcased simultaneously at retail for the first time since the 2000 launch of the US\$3.4-billion brand

Cinderella, Aurora or Belle will appear in the vanity's mirror and talk to whoever's seated before it.

As for retail presence, all the major mass outlets have signed on for Season of Enchantment, and each chain will carry a distinct product assortment, says Franklin. In August, Toys 'R' Us will host an outlet-wide feature shop showcasing the gold Princess product at the front of each store. At the same time, on the marketing front, DCP is relaunching *Disneyprincess.com*. Details haven't been finalized, but Franklin says you can expect to see a much more immersive online environment for fans of all things Princess. **LC**



## PROPERTY LISTING

### Licenses recently granted

Property	Granted by	Granted to	Product category	Demo	Release date
Di-Gata Defenders	Nelvana	The Game Factory	Nintendo DS video game	kids	October 2007
Dragon Ball Z: Goku Densetsu Tamagotchi	Namco Bandai Games	Atari (Europe)	Nintendo DS video game Wii video game	kids	August 2007
Igor	Exodus Film Group	Simon & Schuster	publishing	kids/tweens	summer 2008
Jay Jay the Jet Plane	PorchLight Entertainment	Coinstar Entertainment Services	coin-operated rides	kids	summer 2007
Lego Star Wars: The Saga Continues	Lucasarts	Traveller's Tales	video games	kids	fall 2007
Little Princess	TV-Loonland	Belltex (Europe)	home textiles	girls	August 2007
Marvel Heroes	Marvel Entertainment	Crocs	footwear	kids	summer 2007
Mustard Pancakes	PBS	Vivendi Visual Entertainment	DVD	kids	September 2007
Nickelodeon properties	Nickelodeon & Viacom Consumer Products	General Mills' Green Giant brand Pandal Bros.	frozen and canned vegetables grapes	kids	late summer 2007
Pocoyo	Granada International	NCircle Entertainment (US)	home entertainment	preschool	September 2007
The Simpsons Movie	Twentieth Century Fox Licensing and Merchandising	Electronic Arts	video game	all ages	fall 2007





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Show Co-creator Anne Wood



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# WALLPOPS PACK A KID DECOR WALLOP

by kate calder

**Removable stickers  
that jazz up kids'  
bedrooms are ripe  
with entertainment  
licensing potential**

fickle tastes. A new line of non-permanent wall stickers may ease the burden without cramping anyone's style, and the potential for applying kids entertainment licenses is patently obvious.

WallPops are large-scale geometric-shaped stickers that come in sets based on different color combinations. Created by Randolph, Massachusetts-based Brewster Wallcovering Company, the appliques stick on and tear away from surfaces as easily as Post-It notes, so kids can cover their bedroom walls and furniture and change

**I**f you're looking for proof that kids view their bedrooms as great big canvases for self-expression, you need only consider the boom that's been playing out in the juvenile room décor product category over the past few years. But this lifestyle trend often puts a strain on parents, who are expected to pony up for new trappings and redecorate often to keep up with their little ones'

them up as often as they like without damaging paint or leaving a sticky residue.

Since launching in September, WallPops have naturally become popular among college students, who are always keen to personalize their institutional dorm rooms in a non-permanent way. But Brewster has since added die-cut shapes and fun colors such as Way Cool Blue, Oh Pear and Flirt to appeal to the kid market.

Creative services manager Paula Berberian says the company is looking into licensing opportunities for WallPops and has one deal in the works that should play out in time for the back-to-school season. It won't likely be long before that portfolio grows, though, since the manufacturer already holds licenses for wall coverings featuring Bratz, Strawberry Shortcake, Tonka and various Nickelodeon properties.

Looking at ways to kidify the line even more, Brewster is working on an erasable WallPops spin-off, which will consist of a large WallPops sheet that has a special coating so kids can scribble and draw all over it with dry-erase markers and then wipe everything clean and start from scratch again. Also in development is a line of larger graphic shapes that are intended specifically for nurseries and toddlers' rooms. **N**





retail

## Overseas apparel players form new trade org

**F**acing what they feel is unfair competition since the quota system that used to limit textile and apparel imports into WTO countries was obliterated in 2005, kids apparel manufacturers in Europe are banding together under a new trade umbrella. Children's Fashion Europe launched in 2005 and currently counts roughly 50 companies from Spain, Italy, France and Portugal among its members. In May, the group lobbied for assistance from the European Union to promote its members' skills and assets worldwide.

"We're trying to protect European manufacturing in this sector because it has been threatened by the low-cost product coming from other countries," says international relations director Alexandra Curatalo from CFE's headquarters in Valencia, Spain. She adds that the association also aims to institute EU rules and regulations on children's health and safety issues, employment conditions, environmental

protection, standardization and adopting trade barriers and non-compliance sanctions.

In terms of promoting the high quality of European children's clothing abroad, CFE members get premium access to exhibition space at FIMI: The International Children's and Young People's Fashion Fair (Valencia, July), Salon Internacional de Puericultura: The International Baby & Child Care Fair (Valencia, January), CPM KIDS (Moscow, September) and the first-ever exclusive European trade fair in Dubai this June. Children's Fashion Europe has also negotiated reduced ad rates with fashion magazines including *Vogue Bambini*, *Collezioni Bambini* and *Kidswear*.

Going-forward plans involve supporting members with legal advice, participating in research and development studies, and exclusive access to a database of non-Euro retailers, commercial agents and international fairs. **KC**



Kids fashion manufacturers band together to promote European quality abroad and lobby for EU backing



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# Kids behind more web buys than you think

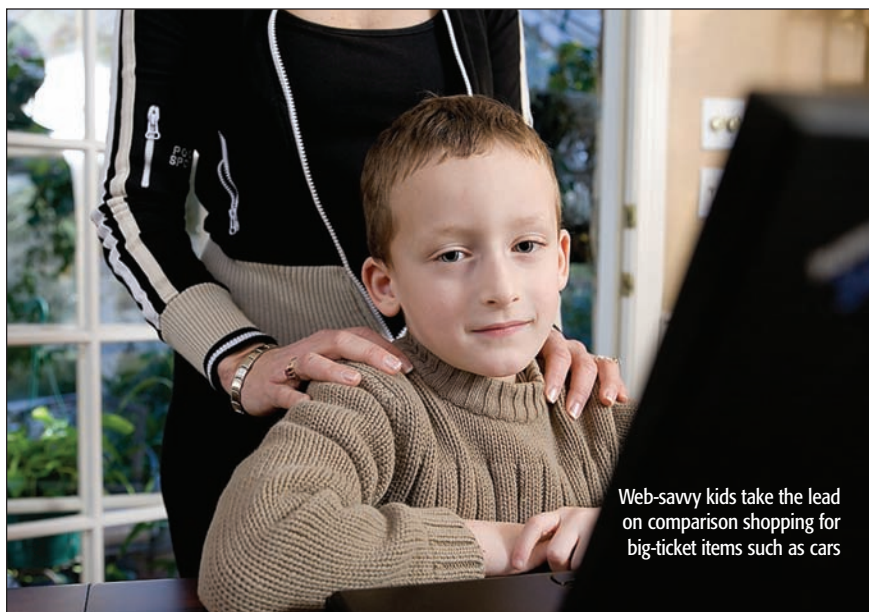
by kate calder

**S**ensing that kids' online activities run deeper than social networks and gaming, Ringwood, New Jersey-based Stars for Kidz conducted a nationwide study in March to see how the demo's instinctive computer skills were affecting the family dynamic. *Surfin' On Mom's Turf* surveyed more than 6,000 kids ages eight to 14 and found that 77% of them are making major online purchasing decisions and are involved in helping their parents with adult tasks like online banking.

Though 96% of kids go online for gaming, 82% of them also jump on to download and shop. And close to three-quarters of the sample group do online chores for their mothers.

"We knew that kids were helping moms out by looking up things like movie information and travel directions," says Adele Schwartz, research director at Stars for Kidz. "But we didn't know they were also helping with job searches, helping single parents post dating profiles and helping parents fill out online IRS forms," she adds. As well, 32% of kids use the web to comparison shop for big-ticket buys like cars, boats and real estate, and 33% help their folks buy gifts online.

Schwartz says younger boys are out-shopping younger girls slightly, but this imbalance



Web-savvy kids take the lead on comparison shopping for big-ticket items such as cars

equals by age 12. Among the 12- to 14-year-old boys surveyed, 20% were banking and paying bills for their moms online, and 18% were getting insurance claims. The two biggest reasons kids say they're playing the role of online consultant is that their parents are too busy to do it themselves, and "clueless" when it comes to online navigation.

Schwartz says retailers and marketers of the kinds of products and services kids are

dabbling in should be careful to incorporate language and information that speaks directly to kids on their sites, as opposed to assuming that adults are the ones who are filling up virtual carts and keying in the credit card numbers. "And I think this study indicates that marketers also have an opportunity to build life-long brand relationships with young consumers in a safe and trusted environment," says Schwartz. **KC**

## Gift cards, the new kid currency

**AS** kids' lives get carved up with even more activities and interests, it can be really hard for loved ones to keep up and give gifts that are appreciated. So it's not surprising that a new NPD study looking at how kids use gift cards found that 60% of them had received one in the few months leading up to the late February online poll, especially since that time frame coincided with Christmas.

But interestingly, the bulk of kids (close to 58%) went into stores without a concrete plan for spending the credit amount on the cards, instead choosing to purchase on impulse. According to the study, which surveyed mothers of kids ages two to 14, toys and board games benefit the most from kid gift card buys, followed by food service outfits. Older kids in the nine to 14 bracket are keener to purchase video games and clothing with their cards, and the average price spent on kids gift cards is US\$44.

Boys are more likely to receive an electronic store gift card, while girls are more likely to receive a card for a department, clothing or book store. Though 96% of purchases across all ages took place in a physical retail outlet, NPD analyst Anita Frazier says the tendency to redeem gift cards online increases with age. Web retailers were most popular with 13- to 14-year-olds.

Frazier says grandparents and aunts & uncles are heavy buyers of gift cards for kids, while parents still tend to purchase physical gifts. **KC**





# THE NEW AMERICAN DAD

## HE'S BUYING KID PRODUCTS AND HE NEEDS YOUR HELP

by kate calder

**More involved than ever before in their kids' lives, dads still struggle in a market geared to moms**

**ON** the brink of becoming a father for the first time, Greg Allen started Daddytypes.com three years ago on a mission to find and share products and information sources that are relevant to men. "Back then, I could count on one hand the number of times I felt I could relate to info that was presented to me," says Allen about finding his way as a new parent in a world that seemed to only speak to moms. His first few postings quickly attracted other dads who felt ignored by mainstream parenting media platforms, and the blog now plays host to more than 100,000 repeat visitors a month.

In the beginning, Allen and his readers often poked fun at out-of-touch ads aimed at dads. But fodder for this brand of mockery is becoming harder and harder to come by, he says. "The idea of including dads in marketing messages visually, or even just by saying 'parents' instead of 'moms,' is getting out there." Allen adds that his site, which initially attracted ads for dad-centered products like masculine diaper bags, now gets buys from brand marketers trying to reach parents in general and include dad in that effort.

But the broader media landscape still has a long way to go with this demo, according to a study that Norwalk, Connecticut-based market research firm Smarty Pants conducted in March. Polling 757 dads ages 18 to 45, and covering off all income levels and ethnicities, *Who's Your Daddy?* provides some

great insight into the parenting and consumption habits of the new American father.

A full 64% of dads say they spend more time with their kids than their own fathers spent with them. And it makes sense since feeding a family and keeping up with the middle-class Joneses these days takes two incomes and requires that Dad play a much bigger role in the general running and upkeep of the household, says Smarty Pants president Wynne Tyree. But by and large, there's still a general misguided assumption that consumer purchases of products for the home or for kids are made by women shopping alone or by husbands and wives shopping together.

In fact, the Smarty Pants team found that 68% of dads buy items for their kids independently a few times a month, and 14% do so on a daily basis. A full 16% report being solely responsible for buying groceries, and only 2% of dads say they rarely or never purchase kids products. Interestingly, 40% of dads polled say they are more likely than their spouses to give in to the nag factor.

Technology and media seem to be areas where dads call the shots most often, with 24% of the field claiming to be solely responsible for purchasing electronic and tech devices, and 15% buying their kids' DVDs, movies and videos.

Clearly, men are out in the market making household purchase decisions, but they may need a little more direction than other consumer groups. According to Tyree, dads report that they often shop from a list their wives make, and sometimes feel lost if they have to stray from it. "There's a huge opportunity here for marketers," she says, "not to just jump out of Mom's shopping cart into Dad's, but to be more holistic in terms of understanding how households function." ■

# Edgar & Ellen's worm poop promo brings the green movement down to kids

**ON** the surface of things, a partnership between a kids entertainment property and plant fertilizer might not seem to make a lot of sense. But Chicago-based Star Farm's goth sibling set Edgar & Ellen have a deep love of all things icky, and that makes for a match made in heaven.

The resulting initiative is a branded recycling drive with TerraCycle, which produces what is essentially liquefied warm poop made from worm-processed organic waste and packaged in recycled soda bottles. "Bottle Brigade" officially kicked off in November 2006, with the distribution of branded Edgar & Ellen collection boxes into 1,450 schools across the US.

The idea is that for every 20 oz. reusable bottle kids bring in from home, their school receives US\$0.05. These empties are then filled with the plant food, rebranded with TerraCycle packaging, and affixed with a tag featuring the kid donor's name, hometown and ideas for saving the environment. The upshot is a product that's made and packaged entirely in waste, and bottles featuring the Edgar & Ellen tags are exclusively distributed at Target.

So far, the Edgar & Ellen boxes have collected two million bottles in more than 3,000 schools and community groups, and the promotion is slated to continue running indefinitely. Above and beyond the inherent gross-out appeal that worm poop holds for kids, the promo also taps into their keen interest in environmental issues and playing a role in the green movement.

According to a study conducted by Stamford, Connecticut-based Weekly Reader Research this past April, 71% of six- to nine-year-olds are aware of global warming, and that figure climbs to 85% amongst the 10 to 12 set. Kids get 33% of their information on environmental issues from school, teachers and textbooks, followed by TV (19%), parents (16%) and the internet



Aligning Edgar & Ellen with a recycling initiative for an organic product fits with the creepy duo's penchant for reusing discarded trash

support for the environment; 73% say their families recycle newspapers, 57% recycle plastic bottles and containers, and 51% recycle glass bottles.

Star Farm co-founder and CEO Trish Lindsay first connected with TerraCycle at a Social Venture Network meeting where CEO Tom Szaky was showcasing his worm poop plant food, which Lindsay says is something that Edgar & Ellen might have created themselves.

The stars of a six-book Scholastic series (which has sold more than 425,000 copies to date) and a Nicktoons animated show for kids ages six to 12 are always coming up with new ways to reuse treasures pilfered from the junkyard next door, and Ellen finds the dump's soil ideal for growing her pet carnivorous plant. **KC**

## Smell-e-vision the next online ad app?

**S**cent infusion seems poised to waft its way into the marketing and programming space in the near future, and the possibilities it opens up for kids properties are definitely intriguing. And Culver City, California-based Scenttv.tv is looking to establish an early foothold in the market-in-the-making. The company opened up an e-store this spring, offering marketing services that revolve around infusing online experiences such as movies, games, music videos, educational programs and user-generated profile pages and blogs with specific smells.

Subscribers who fork over US\$17.95 a month will receive a device called the ScentDome, which hooks up to computers and emits smells. Every 60 days, a new cartridge will arrive in the mail containing a plethora of new scents that correspond with the 60-day ads Scenttv sells. Obviously, reach is everything on the web, and building up to a point when the ScentDome is as ubiquitous as speakers or webcams will be a challenge. The company's COO, Bernadetta Anderson, is hoping to steadily build the subscriber base on the strength of Scenttv's proprietary content.

There's already some kids fare on the site, including a show about a missing gingerbread boy and a learning show where kids can unlock smells associated with words like "cherry" by spelling them correctly.

Scent-infused ads and broadcasts may not infiltrate mainstream online ads or streaming content anytime soon, but Anderson says she's already fielded calls from gaming companies interested in the smell of...what else, burning rubber. **KC**





# Heads up, kids marketers!

## Purchase-prone grandfolks grok to new portal

**W**ith the bulk of baby boomers heading into their golden years, the next wave of grandparents is pegged to be the biggest ever, with Age Wave Communications projecting a headcount of 80 million in the US by 2010. But more importantly, they'll also be way more computer-savvy than any other generation.

A trio of enterprising mothers looked at these market facts, saw them reflected in their own family lives, and smelled a niche in the making. So Heidi Kurlander-Kail, Loryn Franco and Sloane Feldman decided to team up and funnel their collective professional skills in marketing, ad sales and PR into launching EverythingGrandkids.com. The six-month-old site consists of a portal and free newsletter that deliver information about toys, family travel, investment, kids fashion and health & safety issues to involved grandparents who want to keep on top of all the things that will touch on the lives of their grandkids.

The content highlights products and services that grandparents can take advantage of in their ongoing quest to spend quality time and form a stronger bond with their kids' kids. At press time, for example, the site featured a guide to nut-free snacks and a roundup of cool outdoor toys just in time for the summer holidays, when many kids go stay with their grandparents for a week or two.

A recent AARP study showed that grandparents spend US\$30 billion annually on their grandkids, putting up the cash for one out

of every four toys purchased in the US, so they are a really important consumer demographic for anyone managing a kid-targeted licensing program. And online is a good way to reach them, given that December 2006 data from the PEW Internet and American Life Project revealed that 33% of Americans 65 years of age and older are online. And as far back as 2005, the project found that 93% were sending and reading emails, and 65% had gone online to research a product or service.

EverythingGrandkids.com is certainly feeling that increase in online activity. The fledgling site's readers are already posting enough of their own recommendations that Kurlander-Kail, Franco and Feldman are looking to revamp the interface for soliciting these leads, as well as adding a function for uploading family photos.

Relying on word-of-mouth and links to build the site's presence and readership until now, the founders are in the midst of

putting together a press kit with the coverage they've received and already have a home page ad for Hewlett-Packard's Snapfish digital print service. Although they wouldn't divulge site analytics or newsletter circulation figures, the three women stress the value of the newsletter's opt-in reader list for potential advertisers and sponsors. Apart from the newsletter, they also do dedicated email blasts that Feldman says "potential partners, such as toy companies, could use to tap into our audience in our voice." **KC**



Grandparents buy one out of every four toys sold in the US

## News in Brief

### Rudolph posts resumé to attract marketers

Did you know that Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer had a nasty contract dispute with Triple Crown-winning racehorse Secretariat that kept him from guiding Santa's sleigh in 1978? This is just one of many little-known "facts" that can be found on Northpoetalent.com, an online mock talent agency created by brand management firm Character Arts to spur interest in picking up a Rudolph license for Christmastime ad campaigns. Though the character is more than 40 years old, the classic special—not to mention the canonized song associated with it—has an evergreen appeal for both adults and kids. An existing merch program covers everything from Hallmark and Lennox products to junior fashion brand Junk Food. Character Arts principal Jonathan Flom says his company will be choosy about licensing out the character for marketing programs, and the key to getting a nod is a tasteful and property-appropriate planogram.



# NPD study shows early adoption happening even earlier

by jocelyn christie

**A**fter giving attendees at last month's KidScreen West event in L.A. a sneak-peek at some top-line findings, the NPD Group has officially released the third wave of its ongoing *Kids and Consumer Electronics* study. And this year's edition highlights some pretty interesting consumer behavior that's having an impact on the tech market.

For starters, the average age at which kids start their love affair with consumer electronics has declined from 8.1 in 2005 to 6.7 today. TVs and computers attract the youngest first-timers at four or five years of age, while satellite radios and portable digital media players (PDMPs) pick up kid users at around age nine. Dropping down significantly on NPD's first-time usage scale this year were DVD players (up 8% with kids ages four to five over 2006) and digital cameras (up 9%).

PDMPs posted the biggest gain in kid usage, picking up 14% over last year, with 26% of kids polled saying they use

**25% of households surveyed haven't bought a new electronic device in the last 12 months**

NPD analyst Anita Frazier believes this shift from stationary to portable computers is at least somewhat motivated by a physiological reality: little hands can manipulate laptop keyboards a lot easier. Couple that fact with a downward pricing trend in the laptop market, and it's no surprise why Frazier expects the swap to continue in the near future.

In terms of the gender divide, boys and girls show similar usage patterns, except in two key areas: Boys are more avid users of console and portable video game systems, while digital cameras, PDMPs, cell phones and CD players tend to skew girl. In general, though, both groups use electronic devices about three days a week, with non-portable TVs (5.8 days), cell phones (4.3 days) and digital video recorders (4.1 days) shouldering the heaviest loads.

It looks like CE purchases may be slowing down a bit, with 25% of the households surveyed reporting that they haven't bought any new devices in the past 12 months. Those that did step up to the check-out bought cell phones, digital cameras and PDMPs in greater bulk than the other devices included in the survey. Older tech like film cameras and karaoke systems scored record-low purchase levels.

Over the last couple of years, there's been a major influx of kid-friendly versions of CE products, but the target consumer still prefers the real deal. Video games aside, the adult iterations of consumer electronics staples posted higher penetration levels than kid versions of the same devices. And

**Little hands are better-suited to little keyboards, a fact that may be behind a spike in kid laptop usage**

**Kids adopt consumer electronics devices at age 6.7 now, compared to 8.1 two years ago**

these devices now. But interestingly, the CE devices kids use the most—non-portable TVs (73%) and desktop computers (69%)—are on a decline, with TVs down four points and desktops down six over 2005's measurement. Picking up some of that share are laptops, which gained three points this year.

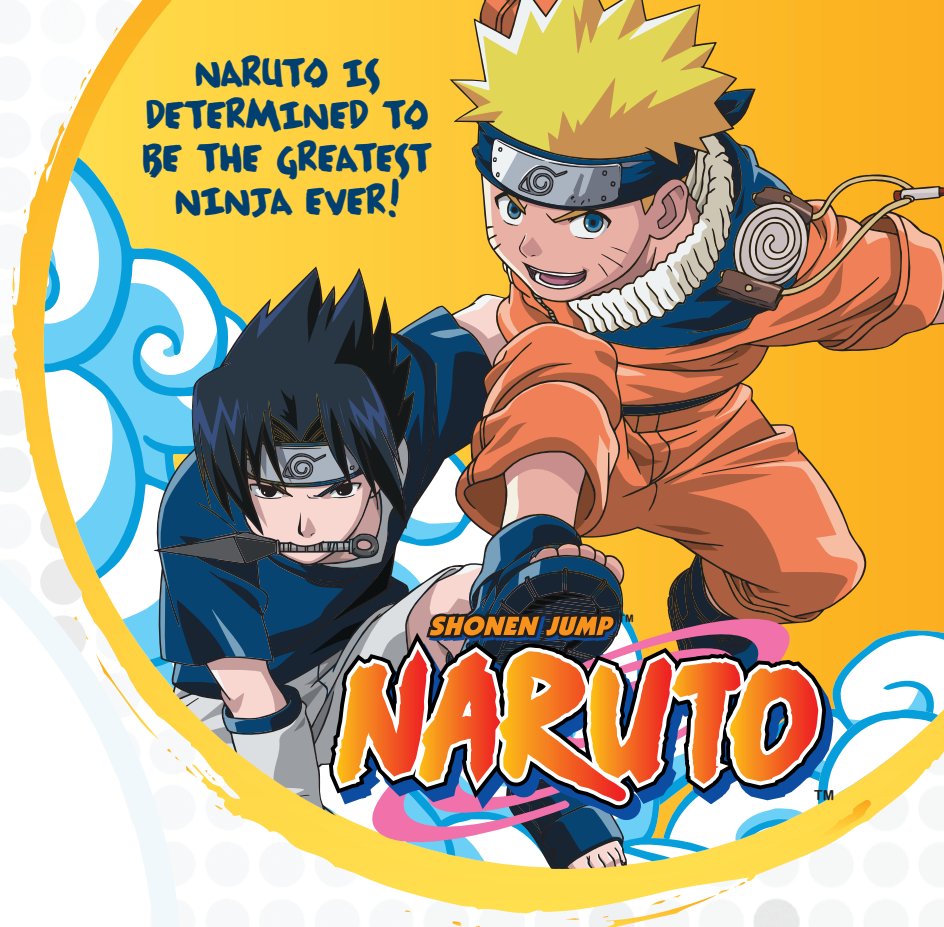


parents seem to be on the same page as their children, with only 74% saying they're interested in branded kid versions of tech products this year, compared to 83% in 2006.

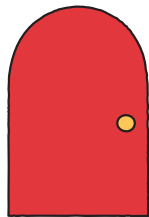
The findings of the *Kids and Consumer Electronics III* study stem from data collected through an online poll of 3,324 parents with kids ages four to 14. In order to qualify, their kids had to own at least one consumer electronic device measured in the survey, and the poll was in the field from March 16 to 22. **N**



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# Making mom's licensing list

My Little Pony Memory Game

Dora Candyland

Disney Scrabble Jr.

Strawberry Shortcake tea set

My Little Pony puzzle

Arthur puzzle

Pops - Shrek cereal

PopTarts - Disney Princess



The industry invests a lot of time delving into why kids like certain properties, but what about their parents? Using original research, Strotzman International's Brady Darwin takes a look at how moms feel about their children's fave characters, and what compels today's gatekeepers to let licensed products into their homes.

by Brady Darwin

**T**he ability to teach life lessons might not be exactly front of mind when it comes to defining the attributes of today's top character/entertainment licenses, but that may be exactly what modern moms are looking for. While kids grow up in a more media-centric, property-saturated world than ever before, their parents are also a lot tougher to please. This group is adamant about raising their kids in an environment that teaches good values, habits and behaviors that will serve their offspring well later in life. And a property's perceived ability to help parents impart important life lessons may help it get a leg up in today's competitive market.

As director of consumer insights at Strotzman International, a toy premium and custom retail product design and manufacturing

company based in Irvine, California, I had the chance recently to sit down with two groups of moms—14 women in total with kids between the ages of three and 13. We discussed what they like and dislike about the characters their kids connect with, and what would compel them to bring licensed goods into their homes. I discovered these moms strongly favor entertainment properties that they feel can help them teach their kids a thing or two.

SpongeBob SquarePants, Dora the Explorer, Elmo, Care Bears, Thomas & Friends and That's So Raven ranked quite highly on the groups' approval lists. In fact, the moms seemed genuinely grateful to have licensed characters they can rely on to help instill the following values and characteristics in their kids:



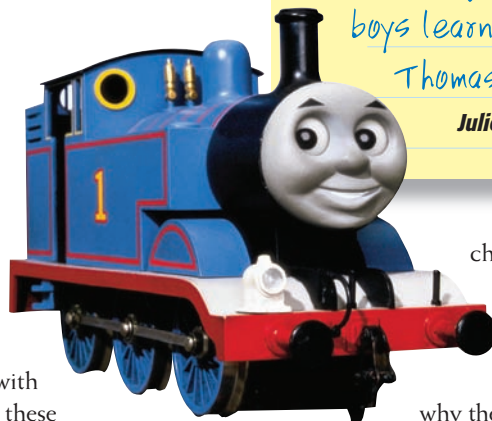
- Personal hygiene
- Healthy eating
- Social interaction skills, such as how to work through a quarrel
- Manners/politeness
- Sharing
- Determination
- Value of a dollar/money
- Respect
- Teamwork
- Courtesy
- Importance of family
- Honesty
- Consequences
- Chores/helping around the house
- Caring for animals
- Good sportsmanship

So, for licensors and marketers with characters that play into any of these life lessons, it would be worthwhile to tout these attributes in an overt way in places where the message will reach moms, even if they're not very familiar with the character. For example, one of the moms told us she uses a plastic Disney plate with three sections as a tool to teach her child proper portion sizes. She thought of this on her own, but if the product's package or POP display advertised this potential benefit, more moms might latch onto that idea. Another of our panelists uses a Barbie ATM machine toy to teach her daughter about the value of money, and how to save money for the future. But again, the potential of that product to teach this lesson was nowhere to be found on the packaging. A perfect complement to this toy would have been a little booklet showing Barbie talking about the importance of saving and spending money wisely.

Some might contend that moms don't want to be told how to raise their kids, but Strottman's extensive research on today's Gen X-aged mom indicates the opposite. Today's moms welcome advice and information—much more than previous generations. Many of today's moms grew up as the first generation of latch-key kids, whose parents both worked full-time and had fewer

"I really like Thomas—all of the stories have a good little message. My boys would memorize the songs. They could tell you the number and colour of every single engine. That's how my boys learned their colors and numbers—from Thomas."

*Julie, mother of three boys ages eight months, five & seven, and two girls ages three & eight*



chances to spend time with their kids. They often had to muddle through typical kid challenges on their own and want to provide more guidance for their own children.

We also asked these moms to tell us about why they don't like some characters. One mother of four (three boys ages four, six and nine and a girl, seven) told us that preschool character Caillou is a bit too whiny in the way he goes about problem-solving, and in her view, doesn't have enough respect for his mother. "The way he behaves is not a way I want my child to behave," she said. "What he says to his mother is not acceptable, and I worry my kids would emulate what they see." Interestingly, SpongeBob, who rated quite highly with some of the mothers, had his share of detractors as well. A 32-year-old mother of five kids under age eight said, "I think SpongeBob is too crude. I don't let my kids watch the show." Similarly, some moms did not appreciate the boisterous quality and broad comedy of *The Fairly OddParents*. One viewed the characters as "rude and obnoxious." She added, "I don't like the tone of voice they speak to each other in, and it's just violent all the time."

It was clear from talking to these moms that they can form strong, permanent impressions of a character based on a single experience. Almost every single panelist who expressed a strong dislike for characters including Spider-Man, The Simpsons and SpongeBob, admitted they had only ever seen one episode of the series or a few minutes of the movie; and none could articulate very

## Mom's property spectrum

Teaches life lessons

Neutral

Just fun/entertaining

Elmo  
Thomas the Tank Engine  
Max & Ruby  
Care Bears  
Veggie Tales  
That's So Raven  
Dora/Diego  
Lizzie Maguire  
Disney Princesses

Spider-Man  
Jimmy Neutron  
Hannah Montana  
Batman  
Pokémon  
Drake & Josh  
The Suite Life of Zack & Cody

Bratz  
The Fairly OddParents  
Pirates of the Caribbean  
Power Rangers  
The Simpsons  
Cartoon Network shows



# The skinny on food licensing

## Moms say the choice should be theirs, not the government's

While it's obvious from our research that today's moms appreciate licensed characters that educate and teach their kids, we wondered if they believe entertainment producers have an obligation to create characters that do this. The conversation quickly turned to food licensing. Moms are well aware of the growing childhood obesity epidemic and that many legislators and advocacy groups are clamoring to prohibit the use of licensed characters on "unhealthy" packaged foods and beverages. So how do they feel about restricting the types of food products licensors can lend their characters to?

Interestingly, not one of the 14 moms we talked to felt that the government should play any role in determining whether characters can be used on products. "I don't see that it's the government's job to tell people what's healthy and what's not, and it's not their job to tell a company how to market a product," said Jennifer, mother of two

boys (two and 13) and two girls (four and seven). Similarly, Julie, who has five kids, piped in with, "I think everyone has a right to make a choice about whether to purchase



Moms don't judge Shrek's ubiquity; they expect it something. Just because there's a licensed character on a box of cereal does not mean you have to buy it."

Moms also feel comfortable with characters who lead dual lives, so to speak. In other words, it's fine by them to have the same licensed character on both healthy

and unhealthy foods at the same time. Kris, a mother of three, said, "It's OK because the kids aren't the ones deciding what they're going to eat. We pack their lunches every night...It's our choice to decide what they're going to eat, at least with [younger] kids." Another mother of three boys and a girl under age nine was even more sanguine. "Yes, that's what I expect," said Marla. "I expect those characters on everything, and I don't correlate it to healthy or unhealthy, or an [action] toy versus a learning toy. When Shrek came out...you saw that face on every single item that they could get that face on, and so it's not shocking anymore. When the kids see it...I might say 'OK, we'll get that this time,' but it's not the selling point for me."

Since the moms didn't seem to harbor any negative feelings towards licensed foods, we asked them if there was any type of product they would want to erase from store shelves. The universal answer? Violent video games with realistic killing. **BD**

specifically why they didn't like it.

It seems like there's an obvious opportunity for licensors to educate parents about the positive qualities their characters exude. But when it comes to constructing marketing plans, they must keep in mind that many moms may never take the time to watch more than a few minutes of footage before making a one-time yes-or-no decision about whether they will ever buy products featuring that character, or let their kids watch their screen vehicles.

As I introduced a wide variety of characters from TV, movies and books into the discussion, a classification emerged that placed any given character property on a spectrum in terms of its likelihood to, and appropriateness for, teaching kids life lessons. (See "Mom's Property Spectrum" on the opposite page.)

Virtually every mom in the two groups voiced concerns about some girls' properties they believe encourage "materialism" and "bratty behavior," and boys' properties that produce "too much testosterone," but most also admitted that their children own licensed products branded with these very properties. Whether they had purchased them directly or their kids had received

them as gifts, our moms' reasons for having them on hand ranged from "the kids just play so much with them," to "I don't want to deprive [my kids] of having fun."

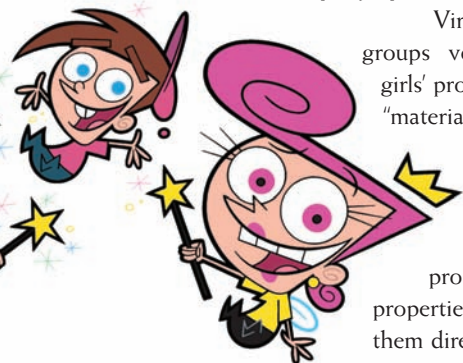
Not surprisingly, it was also clear from the list each mom made of all the licensed character products they found in their homes that they buy far more products featuring properties from the positive end of the spectrum. Dora, Thomas, Barbie and Disney Princesses and Fairies dominated their lists, with products featuring SpongeBob, Power Rangers, Bratz and Spider-Man showing up much less frequently.

Along these lines, the moms agreed that it's more difficult to teach values to boys than to girls, and individual panelists had an especially hard time pointing to characters they thought could serve as role models for boys. And none identified classic superhero characters like Spider-Man and Batman as having this potential.

"With superheroes, the stories themselves don't teach anything," said one mother of five- and 10-year-old boys. "All the superheroes do, honestly, is get my boys all riled up," another commented. "I guess they teach good versus evil," she added, "but there's too much testosterone. I buy them Star Wars stuff, and they like it. It's not real violence, but then they're constantly battling with light sabers or whatever, and it ends up going one step too far."

Superhero licensors should take note of this insight's impact

"Moms" continued on page 70





# LICENSING ONE ON ONE WITH GARY CAPLAN



In his fifth installment of this year-long series, LIMA Hall of Fame member Gary Caplan got to know Lucas Licensing president Howard Roffman a little better. The pair's discussion ranged from upcoming Star Wars franchise plans and new entertainment to Roffman's study of the Kennedy assassination.

**Gary Caplan:** *Howard, thanks a lot for the interview. Even though we've known each other for a very long time, there are many things I'd like to know about you that I haven't had the chance to ask. Why don't we start at the beginning: Can you tell me a bit about your background?*

**Howard Roffman:** Thanks, Gary. After graduating from law school, I worked for a big Washington, DC law firm and found it wasn't really the life for me. But fate intervened and I got recruited by Lucasfilm after two years of law-firming. I had a good friend in Washington who was a very well-connected attorney. And a friend of his was the general counsel for Lucasfilm. She wanted to hire a young associate and said it didn't matter if they had entertainment experience or not. She just wanted somebody who was smart and had a lot of potential, and my friend made the mistake of recommending me. I guess he didn't know me very well! (laughs) So I moved to L.A. in 1980 and started with Lucasfilm.

**Could you tell us a little bit about the areas of Lucasfilm you're responsible for?**

I'm involved in the general management of the company, and we've got an executive committee that is responsible for a lot of decisions that are made. I'm the president of

Lucas Licensing, so I'm responsible for all the licensing business that we do. And I am also VP of business affairs, so all the attorneys in the company report to me.

**How do you balance all those jobs?**

Well, in terms of licensing, I moved into the senior role about 20 years ago. I know it really well now and I've got a great team. So licensing takes up less of my time because I can delegate so much to my team, and that frees me up to focus on other things, like business affairs.

**Howard, looking back 20 years to when you first got started, what are the main ways that you feel the business has changed?**

I think there's been a tremendous consolidation on the property front, on the retail front and, in a lot of ways, on the licensee front. But definitely when I started, Wal-Mart was not the first name people thought of in retailing. Kmart was the king and Toys 'R' Us was still kind of coming up. There were a lot more retailers and there wasn't this concentration of power, and that has fundamentally affected the business.

**In the case of Star Wars, it does significant business in the specialty channel. So you are fortunate that the demand for your property extends beyond big box and mass market retail.**

Star Wars is unusual in that respect because it's such a growth property and such a long-lasting property, and there are markets it satisfies that wouldn't be available to a lot of other IPs. But a new kids property that starts out today is probably not going to have a collectors segment. And to be honest, even though specialty stores are an important component of our business, the mass market still, by far, accounts for the lion's share of sales.

**Can we talk about George Lucas, your boss, for just a minute? George has received many honors over the years, and recently, he was inducted into the Toy Industry Association Hall of Fame. How did he feel about that?**

I think he was very proud of that award and I was with him that night. He was genuinely touched by the tribute and the outpouring of affection from the toy industry in general. At the reception people were coming up to him for his autograph and telling him how much Star Wars has affected their lives.

**Does he get involved in product design?**

Well, with George, it's always been that the creative process in making his films comes first. He has to do what he wants to do for the purpose of making a great film, and if it has licensing potential, that's a great offshoot, but that's not the motivating factor for

him. But he does really love the products. He looks at every product when samples come through. And over the years, he's developed a great trust of our licensing organization so he's really delegated that responsibility to us. If there are big questions that come up about the appropriateness of the category or something that we know will be out of ordinary, I'll go to him and make sure he's comfortable with it. He was very involved in the creation of the Star Wars attractions at the Disney theme parks, and he's got a book project that he's working on right now.

**In the years that you've spent with George, has he ever spoken to you about who his favorite characters were when he was a kid?**

Somewhat. He was an avid comic reader and a film buff. He was really into Flash Gordon serials and was very influenced by Disney; he was at the opening of Disneyland in 1955. As he got older and started going to film school, he also was influenced by a wide range of filmmakers, including Kurosawa and John Ford.

I was always kind of the brainy kid and got interested in esoteric academic subjects. I even spent a good part of my teenage years researching the Kennedy assassination. I eventually wrote a book about it.

**You wrote a book on it? Can tell me a bit about it?**

I wrote it in my last year of high school. It looked at the way the Warren Commission investigated the assassination and the way it kind of presumed Oswald was guilty. It was actually called *Presumed Guilty* and was published during my first year of law school.

**You should be very proud of that. Will you give me an autographed copy if you have an extra one lying around?**

(laughing) If I can find it! It was long, long ago and far away.

**What can we, as fans, look forward to in coming months from Lucasfilm and Star Wars?**

There are a lot more stories to be told in the Star Wars universe. When George finished Episode III, he said, "I'm through making Star Wars movies," but he wasn't through with Star Wars stories. And what he's done is switch his attention to the medium of television. He's working on a brand-new CGI series, *The Clone Wars*, which takes place between Episodes II and III. They're expecting that to hit the market sometime in the second half of 2008. And all I can say is, it's a very breakthrough series.

**I've seen some of it. Amazing animation. Where is it being produced?**

It's a collaboration between Lucasfilm Animation up at Skywalker Ranch, Lucasfilm Animation

ONE THING THAT I LOVE ABOUT THE PROPERTY IS THAT YOU CAN FIND ELEMENTS OF YOURSELF IN SO MANY OF THE CHARACTERS. (FOR EXAMPLE), THERE'S SOMETHING SIMPLE AND PURE ABOUT LUKE SKYWALKER THAT'S VERY APPEALING; HE'S SUCH A DREAMER, AND THE CHARACTERIZATION OF LUKE IN THE FIRST FILM IS PRICELESS. HE'S ONE OF THE GREAT ARCHETYPES THAT GEORGE HAS CREATED.

—HOWARD ROFFMAN



**How about you, Howard? When you were a kid growing up in Philadelphia, what were your pop culture influences?**

I watched a lot of television and read a lot.

**Getting back to Lucasfilm for a minute. Howard, in our business, some properties come and go in what seems like the blink of an eye. Why do you think the Star Wars and Indiana Jones franchises have been so successful over the years?**

Well, Star Wars is definitely the one I can talk to in the most detail because that's something that we manage day-in and day-out. It is—even with as much as I know about Star Wars—still a little bit humbling to think how deeply it has affected people for such a long time. I think a lot of it has to do with the way the story is structured; it's built around classical mythology and resonates

with people in terms of its fable-like quality. And it's deep. There's a complexity to the society, characters and relationships George has created.

in Singapore and then another facility called CGCG in Taiwan. George is very excited about this program and actively involved in it; he's the executive producer. And he's also planning a live-action series to follow the animated series. It will be edgier and a little more adult-focused, but both of them are true to the Star Wars ethos, using all extensions of the Star Wars universe. The other area we're working in, which is a very important one for us in terms of new ways to tell Star Wars stories, is video games. We've got some dramatic new technology for the next-generation consoles. We've got a game coming out in the first half of 2008 called *The Force Unleashed* that is actually set in between Episodes III and IV, so it's that whole 20-year period that we've never explored before.

**Speaking of extensions of the Star Wars universe, has anybody ever counted the number of products produced over the years?**

"One on One" continued on page 72



KidScreen's panel of international licensees, agents and retailers gives four new properties a look-see just before their Licensing Show debut.

# VIRTUALSHOWROOM

*It's not getting any easier to launch a brand-new entertainment property, but this year's group of respondents seem relatively impressed with the potential of the four fledglings, assessing them as having a good, if not a very good, shot at breaking into the market. As for what ranks high on participants' wish lists, TV-driven properties are number one, followed by licensed brands, and several players are scouting for IP derived from online sources. When it comes to demographics, the majority of our judges are looking for something to hit the spot with the 11-plus crowd, and a scant handful are hoping to find preschool-pleasing prospects.*



**Owner/licensor:** Mike Young Productions/  
Taffy Entertainment

**Territory of origin:** US

**Description:** It's a 13 x 22-minute 2-D animated preschool series that revolves around the magical world of an adorable, imaginative little girl named Chloe, who embarks upon fantastical adventures during dress-up play with her security blanket and best friend, Lovely Carrot. She interacts with the audience and encourages viewers to celebrate how delightful it is to be a small child. No presales or existing deals have been confirmed yet, but Taffy has taken the concept to international markets.

**Concept:** Each episode begins with Chloe and Lovely Carrot at play in Chloe's room. They may be rearranging the dollhouse, practicing a new dance, or playing any other game that would engage a four-year-old. Then Chloe and her friends explore a simple math concept and confront some kind of problem or impasse until their play

## Chloe's Closet

At-a-Glance Temperature Read

**Overall potential in respondents' product categories/territories:** good

**Would respondents add Chloe to portfolios:** yes (80%), no (20%)

**Best potential product categories:** toys & games, publishing

**Desired retail channel for merch launch:** mid-tier (60%), mass (20%), specialty (20%)

**Expected royalty range:** 8% to 12%

While Chloe's Closet received a "good" rating overall, respondents were quick to point out a number of the market challenges that lie ahead for Taffy if it hopes to mount a viable merchandising program. For one, most made reference to a perceived glut of preschool properties on the market, and a few pointed out that the look of Chloe's may not be distinctive enough to cut through a field dominated by competitors like Dora the Explorer. That said, most instantly recognized the show's built-in dress-up play pattern and said it would easily lend itself to categories such as role-play that live a bit outside of the traditional toy, publishing, home video triumvirate that drives most preschool licensing programs. And the majority of respondents felt that a daily spot on Nick Jr. was the ideal home for the show.

is interrupted by the Closet, which magically comes to life with glowing lights and music. Chloe and Lovely Carrot can barely contain their excitement and curiosity as they slowly open the door to see what costumes and adventures await inside.

**Demo:** ages two to six

**Domestic and international categories open:** All

**Initial territories of interest:** US, UK, France and Germany

**For licensing opportunities, please contact:** Cynthia Money, president of worldwide consumer products & marketing, Taffy Entertainment, 818-999-0062, [cpg@taffyentertainment.com](mailto:cpg@taffyentertainment.com)



**Owner/licensor:** Nickelodeon & Viacom Consumer Products

**Territory of origin:** US

**Description:** *The Naked Brothers Band* debuted in February 2007 on Nickelodeon's TEENick programming block and was the highest-rated premiere in seven years. Featured music in the mockumentary-style series is crafted by real-life brothers and musicians, Nat (12) and Alex (nine) Wolff.

**Concept:** *The Naked Brothers Band* has been described as "Spinal Tap meets a Hard Days Night" for a whole new generation. Music is the focal point of the live-action series. Each episode features new tunes and follows the action and hilarity of superstar kid musicians making videos and living their lives on and off the set.

**Demo:** kids ages seven to 12

**Domestic and international categories open:** apparel, accessories, home décor, packaged goods, toys

**Initial territories of interest:** US and Canada

**For licensing opportunities, please contact:** Jim Davey, SVP of consumer products marketing & retail, james.davey@nick.com (US inquiries); Tanya Haider, SVP of international consumer products, tanya.haider@nick.com (international inquiries)

## The Naked Brothers Band

### At-a-Glance Temperature Read

#### **Overall potential in respondents' product categories/territories:**

very good to excellent

#### **Would respondents add Naked Brothers to portfolios:**

yes (71%), no (14.5%), n/a (14.5%)

#### **Best potential product category:** apparel

**Desired retail channel for merch launch:** mass (50%), mid-tier (33%), specialty (17%)

**Expected royalty range:** 8% to 12%

*The Naked Brothers Band* garnered the most positive responses in the showroom by far—and given its Nickelodeon pedigree and prime broadcast placement, that shouldn't come as a surprise. Even though historically it's proven difficult to translate live-action content into merchandise, the panelists were optimistic that apparel, video games, electronics and even musical instruments would work for the property. One Mexican retailer said, "I feel this kind of show is what Mexican kids want," and even suggested Nick should consider making a Latin-American version of the show with local kid musicians. Also, the panelists pointed out that *The Naked Brothers'* focus on real-life musicians should help entice tweens, however, it will face stiff competition from current musical super-groups.





## Rainbow Magic

### At-a-Glance Temperature Read

**Overall potential in respondents' product categories/territories:** good

**Would respondents add Rainbow to portfolios:** yes (67%), no (33%)

**Best potential product categories:** apparel, stationery

**Desired retail channel for merch launch:** specialty (50%), mass (33%), mid-tier (17%)

**Expected royalty range:** 8% to 12%

According to our panelists, HIT's biggest challenge in transitioning this charming book property into a television series and a wider licensing program is going to be staking new ground in a girls space that's seemingly flooded with fairies—primarily those belonging to Disney and Winx Club from Italy's Rainbow. However, several felt the existing book art had a lot of potential in the apparel, stationery and gift categories. One agent also felt "it could work well as a console game for the Nintendo DS and Wii." And, interestingly, a Japanese agent said a program could work in his country if HIT created a style guide that was sensitive to the local aesthetic, which perhaps opens up the possibility of versioning the property.

**Owner/licensor:** HIT Entertainment

**Territory of origin:** UK

**Description:** Rainbow Magic is a collection of 60 books about the magical adventures of Kirsty and Rachel and their interactions with different groups of fairies. HIT is currently developing an animated series around the four-year-old publishing franchise, which has sold more than 10 million copies to date and is currently distributed in 23 countries.

**Concept:** Each series of seven books focuses on a different group of fairies that reside in Fairyland, such as The Rainbow Fairies, The Weather Fairies, The Jewel Fairies and The Pet Fairies. While different, the various clans have one thing in common: the need to fight nefarious Jack Frost and his bumbling gaggle of goblin henchmen.

**Demo:** girls five to nine

**Domestic and international categories open:** All categories are open for business, including social expressions, collectibles, accessories and arts & crafts.

**Initial territories of interest:** Rainbow Magic is licensed to publishers in 23 countries, with further rollouts planned.

**For licensing opportunities, please contact:** Peter Byrne, EVP of international licensing, merchandising and home entertainment, 44-020-1554-2500, pbyrne@hitentertainment.com (international inquiries); Jamie Cygielman, SVP & GM of consumer products, 212-463-9623, jcygielman@hitentertainment.com (US inquiries)



## TinPo

### At-a-Glance Temperature Read

**Overall potential in respondents' product categories/territories:** good

**Would respondents add TinPo to portfolios:** yes (55%), no (45%)

**Best potential product category:** apparel

**Desired retail channel for merch launch:** mass (43%), mid-tier (28.5%), specialty (28.5%)

**Expected royalty range:** 8% to 12%

While respondents agreed TinPo's prospects were good, there wasn't a consensus on the ideal consumer target. Citing that the proposed demo was a bit too wide, some panelists thought TinPo should skew older and others felt it should go younger. Certainly, the urban look of the property could appeal to teens, and one respondent suggested the interstitials should air on a music broadcaster to attract that crowd. On the other side of the coin, a software manufacturer said AGP "is WAY overstating the demo." He added that "the property has a very young look to it, and the Chaplinesque humor will skew the brand young—it looks like a cute preschool property."

**Owner/licensor:** American Greetings Properties

**Territory of origin:** US

**Description:** Inspired by the limited-edition urban vinyl collectibles of the same name, these 13 x 30-second interstitials are written by Jymn Magon (Disney's *A Goofy Movie*) and will bow this fall on DIC/CBS's Saturday morning block. TinPo's characters are inspired by 1950's science kits, and each one is a clone of another and looks similar to its predecessor, but not exactly the same.

**Concept:** Welcome to the world of TinPo, the tin-dustrial city full of quirky wee characters who overcome problems by way of their Chaplinesque teamwork.

**Demo:** ages four to 11

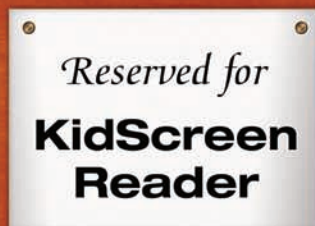
**Domestic and international categories open:** All

**For licensing opportunities, please contact:** Rick Goralnick, AGP director of domestic licensing, 212-386-7347, rgoralnick@ag.com (US inquiries); Donna Bruschi, AGP director of international licensing, 212-386-7355, dbruschi@ag.com (international inquiries)



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# THE BEST-LAID PLANS

## Transitioning a series into a brand? Here's a roadmap to get you started

by lana castleman

**A**rguably an original TV series that translates into a successful licensing and marketing property is looked upon as something of a miracle right now. However, most of the ones that do break through don't just magically spawn product on retail shelves that awaits the embrace of eager fans. In order to make it that far, all partners—including series creatives and licensees—have to be on the same page, pushing the IP's exposure to consumers. There's got to be a master plan, an IP roadmap that plots the first five or so years of a property's life beyond the TV screen.

To resource- and time-strapped independent creators and producers, mapping out the next half decade while you're busy cobbling together financing seems like a luxury. And certainly, the cost of even the most bare-bones brand plans can add up in terms of the hours it takes to hatch one, let alone implement it. But if the series in question begs any longer-term brand development (and most do), a company can't start thinking about style guides, licensing, consumer marketing and PR when it's ready to go to air. As Pierre Sissman, CEO of French prodco Cyber-Groupe Animation and former Disney Europe exec, notes, it's simply "too late" then.

Since its 2005 broadcast launch in France, Cyber-Groupe's CGI preschool series *Ozie Boo* has moved into its third year in production, and the property now has more than 300 product SKUs, including DVDs, toys and apparel. Sissman maintains that *Ozie Boo* wouldn't have made it this far without a well-plotted map. "If the brand plan is not defined enough, you'll make mistakes and won't be able to sustain the brand," he says.

### Drilling into the core

The goal of the plan is to determine what the property's brand positioning will be for the next five years, so taking time to dig around and distill the core attributes of the series is key. And that can start with an exercise as simple as creating a list of words that identify its values. (For example, a gentle preschool property might evoke words like warmth, family, laughter and exploration.) From there, delve into the series' bible and look at story arcs, central character motivations and relationships. A clear picture should soon emerge of what the series is trying to achieve, and what would and wouldn't be appropriate in terms of brand activities and partnerships. Throughout the process, the creative vision of the series must stay top of mind. "You do not make a series just to sell diapers," says Sissman. "Creative has to be the primary driver, and then it's up to the marketing division to figure out how to sell it."

Cyber-Groupe Animation's *Ozie Boo* has stayed on track since going to air in 2005, thanks to an exhaustive six-year brand plan



### And we're off

Once the attributes have been laid out, it's time to bring in licensing and marketing types to figure out what kind of products and marketing/PR initiatives will suit the brand, keep it on track and define its unique selling proposition. Charlie Day, president of US licensing agency The Sharpe Company, says he likes to become involved as early as possible during the development of a series. "You need to have some input," he says. "An early presence helps identify play patterns and merchandise values inherent in the show, and it gets planning started."

For a series in development with a bible and a few eps written, it takes about six months to research and formulate a full plan. Most start by defining two primary demos: kids who will watch, and kids who will purchase. Often they're not one and the same. And having the core attributes clearly defined will help to further hone in on the proposed consumer base. That said, it's also worth keeping in mind that demos in the kids space are changing.

Gary Pope, partner at research firm Kids Industries in the UK, says children develop so quickly that there are no longer



broad age ranges covering one demo. Categories have shifted and become narrower. Preschool now splits between zero to two and two to four. Core kids are no longer six to 11, but fall into three groups: five to seven, eight to nine and 10 to 11. And Debra Joester, CEO of New York-based licensing agency The Joester Loria Group, agrees. "If that's not the way you're viewing demos," she says, "you're overestimating the reach of your property."

Once that's settled, the rest of the research goes into surveying the competitive landscape, assessing similar properties and what retail and marketing opportunities exist in the regions you're targeting, and determining the property's point of difference. Without that, pitches to prospective licensing and marketing partners won't get off the ground. "You have to be very clear about what sets the property apart from the other 50 they're likely to see," says Al Ovadia, president of Calabasas, California-based agency Al Ovadia & Associates. If a similar IP went to market and failed, the second one probably will too, he says, adding that if what's out there is working, consumers will stay loyal and pay little attention to the newcomer.

At this point, it may be time to conduct as much preliminary consumer research as the budget allows. Jamie Cygielman, SVP and GM at HIT Entertainment, says the company regularly consults would-be consumers when developing a brand proposition and plan. "We want to make sure kids like it and caregivers feel good about it." Often having kids watch initial animation and gauging their reaction is enough to build on. The Sharpe Company's Day is even more matter of fact. "To convince a toy company of the viability of a property [before broadcast], you've got to provide them with audience research, however minimal."

## Timing is everything

Now comes the nitty-gritty of plotting a course for the next five years or so. Presuming there's a broadcaster and air date in place (or at least a target on both counts), the plan's authors can start plotting timelines and work-back schedules for forging licensing deals, launching product and starting trade and consumer marketing. While exact scheduling varies from property to property, there are some timing tactics most brand managers and licensors agree upon.

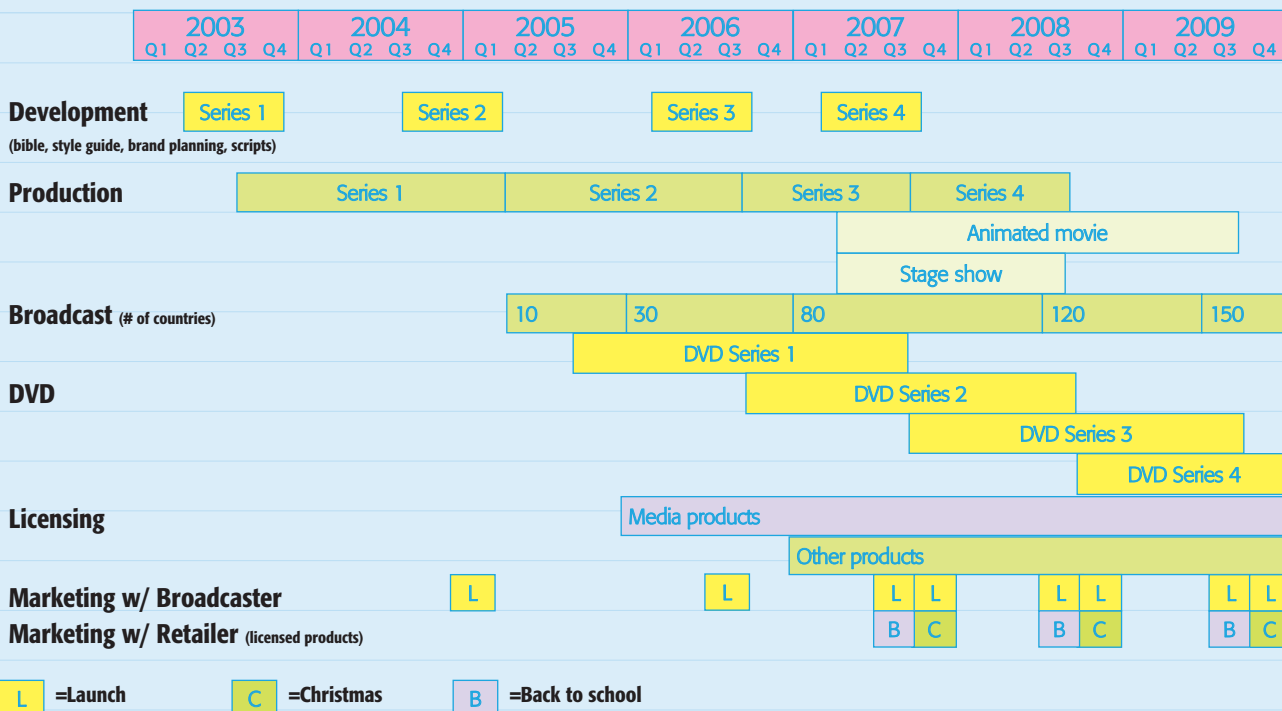
Preschool properties traditionally have a much slower rollout and longer build and shelf life than older-skewing fare. Ideally, the plan should allow for 18 months to two years to seed a property on air before launching product. Shows that attract an audience of kids ages six and up can go to market a bit sooner—within six to nine months of going to strip, if TV ratings are solid. "These kids are old enough to say they want the property," notes Day.

And for shows appealing to kids over nine, Jim Davey, SVP of marketing and retail development at Nickelodeon & Viacom Consumer Products, says six months may be enough time to launch a program. It's a case of striking while the iron's hot. "Tweens have so many purchasing options, whether they are character or lifestyle, that you just need to seize the opportunity when you have it," he explains.

As for the work-back, on the retail side you need to consider retailer production cycles. When do targeted retailers change out product and redesign planograms? How do those plans work with the proposed lead categories and series launch? Then moving back from that, where do trade and consumer marketing efforts kick in?

For example, when HIT launched Bob the Builder's second series, *Project Build It*, Cygielman says news and advertising hit the trades 24

## Life is a highway—a brand timeline



months before consumers ever saw it in order to start attracting new partners and building retailer awareness. And to make the biggest splash with consumers, the company created an umbrella marketing campaign. The Watch Along and Build Along message was reinforced in print and TV ads, product packaging and online marketing that rolled out to support the broadcast launch in fall 2005.

And carefully conceived marketing programs are becoming increasingly important. "Some retailers have gotten formulaic on how they view a new property," says Leslye Schaefer, SVP of marketing and consumer products at Scholastic Media. Their checklist includes broadcaster, master toy partner and program scheduling. But, she explains, if you can sit down and tell them exactly what you're prepared to commit in terms of promotion, they are more apt to see the property as a good prospect.

Additionally, start-up marketing need not cost the world. It's an out-of-pocket expense, but Joester estimates a planned outlay between US\$100,000 and US\$200,000 would enable an IP owner to generate interest with retailers and get buy-in from licensees. She notes a pot that size can deliver stunts and sponsored activities that should take the property through the first 12 to 18 months, getting it to the point where a licensee-led central marketing fund kicks in.

### Charting the life cycle

Unless churn and burn is the name of the game, most IP owners try

and plan for a five-year life cycle, with the first year dedicated to the series' production and introduction to the market. The second is usually about getting the show on air and working at forging closer ties with broadcasters, licensees and retailers and familiarizing consumers. At the end of the second year, home entertainment, publishing and other media merchandise should go out to help build brand exposure.

In the third year, it's all about getting a full-on consumer products program into retail. This is also where a new series or entertainment event and a look at licensing secondary merchandising categories should be factored into the plan. If all goes well, the series peaks in the fourth year and sales begin to settle out. (See "Life is a Highway" on page 68). Of course, this is all best-case scenario planning, but as Ovadia puts it, there's no choice, if you want to make it work.

And it's not to say the plan's set in stone. While it's unwise to waver on the property's core attributes and unique positioning, the market dictates what path you follow, and there's constant reassessment involved once the ratings and retail figures start rolling in.

By the middle of the second year, says Sissman, you should be able to determine whether the property's operating on a three-, five- or 10-year life cycle. Ozie Boo, for example, is still tracking up. Broadcast and licensing deals coming in for 2008 doubled revenues from year two in 2006. At that point, Sissman decided to put a feature-length film into development that he believes will carry the property past 2010. **S**

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"Moms" continued from page 59

merchandise because they don't see the value of these properties. An opportunity exists to educate moms and change their minds!

On the other hand, Christian book stores came up in both groups, without prompting, as a place where moms could find the kind of characters they're looking for. Veggie Tales, The Wiggles, Hermie and 3-2-1 Penguins were cited as examples of characters moms like, but that don't have much of a merch profile in large discount and mass retail outlets. Licensors might do well to pay more attention to the growing Christian retail channel and look for successes that might transfer well to the mass market.

Finally, we asked moms which single life lesson they need the most help with when it comes to teaching their kids. Acceptance ("accepting that everybody is different and has their own special talent"), manners, tolerance ("understanding different cultures, ethnicities, cultural and religious traditions"), honesty and appreciating the value of money ("understanding why you can't just buy a new one when something gets broken") came up the most.



Well, licensors—you've got your work cut out for you! Today's moms are tough nuts to crack. If you already have a character that is about values, make sure moms know it. If you don't, you now have a framework to use in developing your next hit character property. **N**

"I'm a fan of Dora because she's an independent girl and doesn't need any help. She's a leader, she's smart and not afraid...I want my girls to be like that...I want them to be independent. I want them to be thinking. I want them to be leaders."

**Jennifer, mother of two boys, ages two & 13, and two girls, four & seven**

Brady Darvin is senior director of consumer insights at Strotzman International, a full-service agency specializing in the kids and family market that creates and manufactures in-pack premiums, toys, plush and other products for a variety of packaged goods, food service and retail clients. You can reach him at 949-623-7929 or [darvin@strotzman.com](mailto:darvin@strotzman.com).



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# Louie

117 x 7'  
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*"One on One" continued from page 61*

(laughs) It would be like trying to guess the number of jellybeans in a jar.

**OK, let me ask you a different question. What's the biggest-selling Star Wars SKU of all time?**

There are a couple of products that are sort of the motherlode in terms of sales volume. Action figures have been a staple of the Star Wars business—I would say they're one of the bread-and-butter items that drives Star Wars. Role-play has been a really important category, and the Star Wars light saber is by far the most successful role-play product ever. We have sold tens of millions of them over the years. Video games have also become an immensely popular product; we're selling several million copies of each title that comes out.

**Do you have any favorite Lucasfilm characters, ones that you identify with?**

It's funny because these characters have become like my children. It's like asking me who's my favorite child. One thing that I love

about the property is that you can find elements of yourself in so many of the characters. [For example], there's something simple and pure about Luke Skywalker that's very appealing; he's such a dreamer, and the characterization of Luke in the first film is priceless. He's one of the great archetypes that George has created. And Darth Vader was a great character in Episode IV, but all the other movies have developed him so much further. I now think he's one of the most fascinating characters ever created.

**When I saw Episode V, I was blown away by Yoda. I like to quote Yoda and I have a list of his quotes that I refer to all the time. He's probably the character I associate with the most. Nothing wrong with that, is there?**

I would agree with you; he is the most quotable. I use a lot of Yoda quotes, too.

**Howard, getting back to the business, what do you see as the greatest challenges facing the licensing, promotions and merchandising businesses right now?**

Boy, I think it really depends on whether you're looking at being in a position of introducing a new property versus maintaining something that has more of a classic status. This is a really, really tough environment to launch new properties in because of the consolidation of retail. You can sign a million licensees, and if you can't put product on the shelf, you're not going to succeed.

**I agree with you. Thanks so very much for seeing me today. It's been such a great pleasure speaking with you, and please, don't forget to try and arrange to have two seats reserved for me at the world premiere of the Indiana Jones movie in 2008.**

Consider it done, Gary. 

Gary Caplan is known in industry circles as "The Godfather of Licensing" and is president of Gary Caplan Inc., a Studio City, California-based consultancy specializing in the marketing and management of licensing programs. For further information, check out [www.garycaplaninc.com](http://www.garycaplaninc.com).

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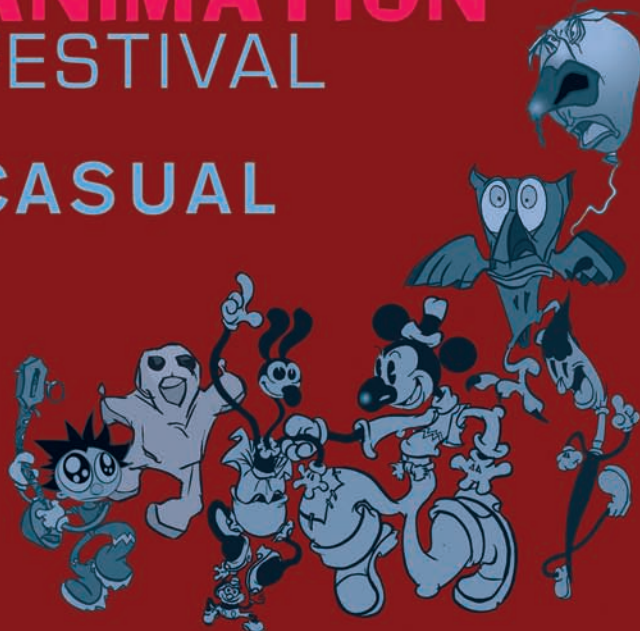
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Everyone is aware of what licensing means, but not everyone is familiar with the complexity of this industry. We firmly believe that we must continue learning every day, even after 25 years.

We recognize that these changes represent increased competition. We believe that our increasing market share is a direct result of our professionalism in dealing with licensors and their properties. Simply stated, we work side by side with our clients. They are an integral part of EXIM, and our success is a result of those synergistic relationships.

We believe that the advantages we create for our brands, by carefully positioning them within the market, the excellent relationships we have forged with our licensees, and our unique understanding of the Latin American and USA Hispanic markets, distinguish EXIM from the rest of our competitors. In short, we believe the key to our success is POWERFUL MARKETING.

We began operating 25 years ago with hope and a clear vision of where we wanted to go. Today, EXIM's marketing strength is defined by the close working relationship we have with our licensors, the value of the properties we represent, our relationships with potential and existing licensees and retail partners, and a dedicated team of 150 persons working proudly in our 19 offices located throughout Latin America.

On behalf of our team of offices located in Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Panama, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Dominican Republic and our US-based headquarters, we extend a warm THANK YOU to all of you.

SYNERGY, IMAGINATION AND POWERFUL MARKETING... THAT'S EXIM LICENSING GROUP...MANY THANKS....AGAIN!

Dr. Elias Hofman  
President





# Latin America's Platinum Licensing Agency Celebrates its Silver Anniversary

By Ryan McKenzie



HEADQUARTERS, DR. ELIAS HOFMAN AND HQ TEAM

Twenty-five years ago, few international licensors had Latin America on their growth territory radar screens. But one local businessman had not only the foresight to recognize the region's huge potential for inbound international properties, but also the talent and verve to tap into it and build a licensing empire around it.



**“Elias is by far one of my all-time favorites in this industry. No one knows the Latin American market better and no one has done more to educate me about how business in this territory works. Congratulations on many successful years!”**

**- Holly Rawlinson, VP Licensing and Entertainment, Pokemon USA**

A name now known throughout the global entertainment industry, Dr. Elias Hofman founded Exim Licensing Group in Argentina in 1982 as a trading company specializing in the import and export of toys and premiums for local retailers. Licensing became a strategy born of necessity as the region experienced a temporary prohibition against toy imports. By offering toy licenses to local manufacturers, the fledgling agency helped to keep Argentina well stocked with toys from international manufacturers.

The tenacity with which Hofman launched and continues to run his business is evidenced in his early licensing relationships with toy manufacturers and licensors. His first license was with General Mills and was maintained after Kenner Parker Toys separated from General Mills and was bought by Tonka, which was eventually acquired by Hasbro. A full-circle success story, Exim's first licensed toy line and the first brand for which the

agency acquired non-toy rights—Strawberry Shortcake—is currently the number-one character license across the Exim network, which has expanded over the years to include regional offices in Caribe, Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Panama, Venezuela, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Brazil, Uruguay and Chile.

And while the brand fizzled out in much of the world following its late-eighties heyday and has staged a dual-target comeback over the past five years, Strawberry Shortcake has been a mainstay in Latin America thanks to a localizable live-action format initiative pioneered by Exim in the early days when the first wave of toys was heating up in the region. “The brand's staying power has lasted a lot longer in Latin America than in any other region, possibly because the live-action series introduced a different way to relate to the characters,” former DIC President Brad Brooks told KidScreen in June 2005. Exim revisited the Strawberry Shortcake untooned concept in

**HiT entertainment**





# Strawberry Fields Forever!

Obrigado!  
Muchas Gracias!  
Thank You Exim &  
Congratulations  
on 25 years!



AMERICAN GREETINGS



2004, funding and creating 36 new half hours. DIC followed suit in 2005 and offered the concept at MIPCOM, hoping to expand the reach of the sweet-smelling property into more international markets.

While Hofman poured all of his creative energy into developing innovative strategies for the properties he represented, the early years were marked by a much more rudimentary business plan. "We have to admit that in the beginning, we were simply trying to close representation deals while also focusing on expanding the business to other territories throughout the region." A deceptive simple plan—and one for which success hinged almost entirely on Hofman's dogged determination to convince international licensors to place their Latin American business in his nimble hands.

Hofman recalls shadowing Australian Broadcasting Corporation's Grahame Grassby for two years on the trade show circuit in search of Latin American rights to Aussie preschool hit Bananas in Pyjamas. Whether he wore Grassby down or won him over, ABC appointed Exim as Latin American agent for the property, with tremendous success. Latin America became the number-two territory for the property behind Australia and Bananas is still the number-one preschool brand in Brazil in terms of revenue generation.

After making Bananas the darling of the Latin American live show circuit, Hofman decided he could do the same for



ENTERTAINMENT DIV.- LIVE FAIRLY ODD PARENTS SHOW.

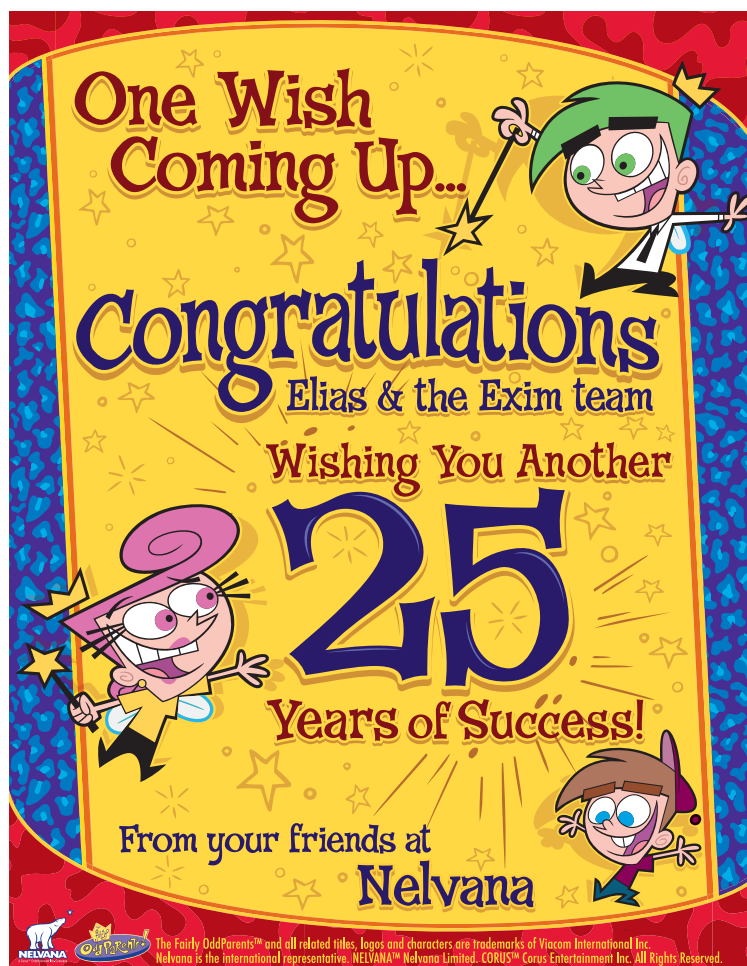
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**“Elias Hofman and his entire staff are a joy to work with. The whole group is a wonderful mix of dedicated and talented professionals who understand the nuances of all countries within the Latin American territory. Each office works toward a common goal of excellence and achievement. I look forward to working with Exim for many years to come!”**

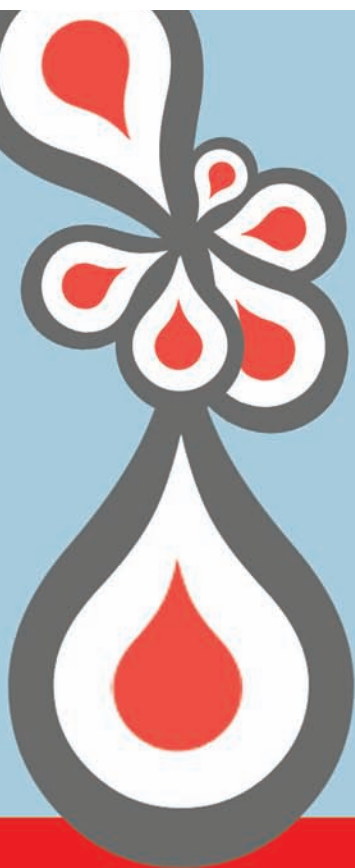
**- Dan Waite, Vice President/Regional Manager,  
Latin America for DIC Entertainment**

s80



**EXIM MEXICO - ALDO MIZRAHI CEO & TEAM**

HIT Entertainment's Barney. "After nearly three years of telephone calls, emails and meetings in Dallas and at trade shows, Elias finally convinced the head of our Stage Show Group that Exim could handle the Barney touring business in Latin America as well as, if not better than, HIT," says Karyn Folbe, HIT's VP, International. "Given the vast number of people who have seen Barney perform in Latin America, as well as the continued growth of our Barney consumer products business in the region, he was right."



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**EXIM AGOSIN CHILE - SHAI AGOSIN CEO & TEAM**

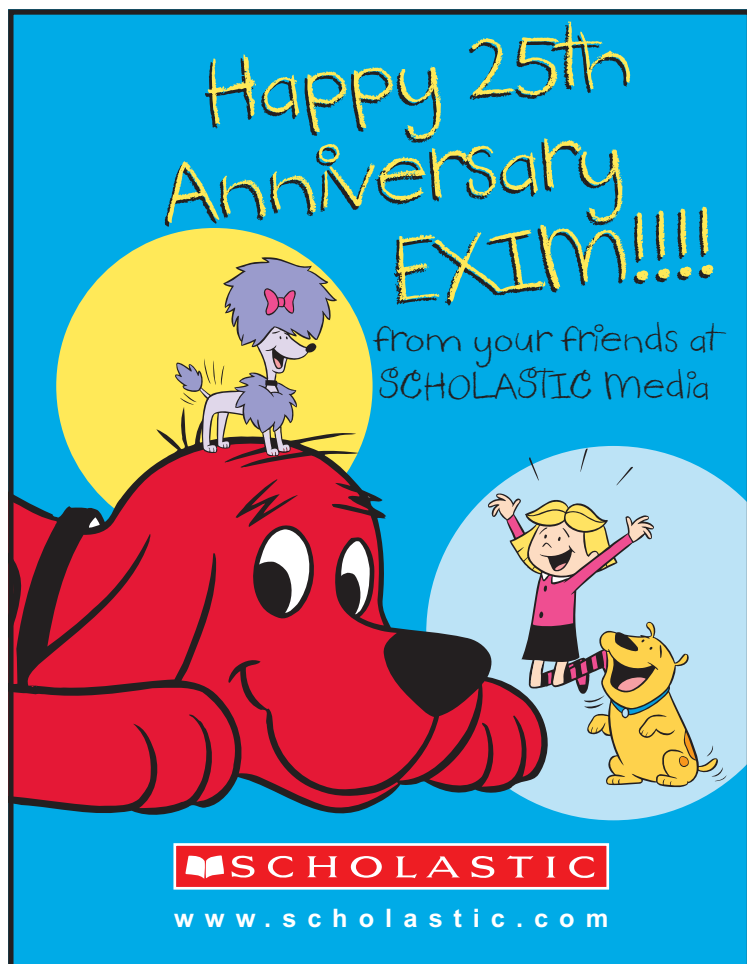
Being right as often as he's been over the past quarter-century could have inflated Hofman's ego, but he has remained refreshingly modest. Asked what the most significant lesson he's learned over the years was, Hofman unflinchingly replies: "That day by day, we must continue to think of ways to be more creative, efficient and competitive—in one word, excellence—but we must also be humble enough to realize that there is always so much more to learn."

And learn he has. One of the most difficult lessons has been not to neglect local opportunities whilst building a client roster that now includes industry heavyweights like MGM, Hasbro, Discovery Channel, American Greetings, DIC Entertainment, NBA, HIT, Scholastic,

s82

**"HIT extends our sincerest congratulations to Exim on reaching a milestone - 25 years in the licensing industry. We have worked with Exim for the past 10 years across Latin America on some of HIT's most successful properties and we have continually grown these brands year on year. We look forward to developing our business even further with Exim for many years to come."**

**- Karyn Folbe, VP, International, HIT Entertainment.**



**EXIM ARGENTINA - JONATHAN HOFMAN CEO & TEAM**

United Media and Universal. In thinking regionally, one of the two main growth strategies Exim launched with, the company passed on some very interesting properties. In the mid-nineties, Exim took on Chiquititas, a live-action show about a group of kids living in an orphanage, because it afforded the agency the chance to work collaboratively with Argentina's Channel 11 Telefe. While the property drew criticism locally for its numerous tie-ins and merch activity, it became an international success, selling over 2 million albums and millions of licensed products and tickets for live concerts.

But the industry landscape changed dramatically following the heyday of the mid-nineties, with licensors demanding more

of agents and licensees and a shift towards multiplatform brand development to capture fickle kid eyeballs. "Nowadays, instead of selling a contract, we are helping licensors to build brands and to further explore marketing tools such as licensing and promotions to generate added value and results," notes Hofman. "In that regard, the level of services that we render for both licensors and licensees has not only changed, but increased."

Exim responded by altering its strategy, beginning with a 2001 headquarters shift from Argentina to Miami, the business capital of Latin America. That same year, the company created an entertainment division dedicated to television productions, live shows and music for the properties it represents. More recently,

**Elias,**  
**Congratulations**  
**on 25 years**  
**from your friends at**  
**Pokémon USA, Inc.**







**EXIM CHARACTER BRAZIL - CELSO RAFAEL CEO & TEAM**

the company added Below the Line, its promotions and premiums business, managed out of Chile and Ecuador, and Exim Trading, which handles product development based on some of Exim's licenses for direct distribution to Latin American retailers.

**“United Media congratulates EXIM on its 25th anniversary and looks forward to continuing the partnership in building the PEANUTS program in Latin America.”**

**- Carla Silva, Director of International Licensing at United Media.**

Exim launched its newest business division, Exim Tech in 2006. Created to manage and maximize its licenses in digital and wireless realms, the division generates content in diverse technological spheres.

“Due to the pace of technological development, kids are changing their behaviour and preferences rapidly,” says Hofman. “I strongly believe that creative talent and content development capabilities will be the keys to succeed in this environment.” To position his company for success in the next quarter-century, Hofman has been busy padding Exim's offices with more professionals in areas such as contracts administration, finance, creative services and sales and marketing.

“Today, we are a team of 150. We have many talented young people on staff and this is the reason why I envision a future with many accomplishments.”

Hofman's personal future is already actively involved in realizing those accomplishments. Daughter Judith serves as Sr.VP of Licensing and Promotions in the Miami office, and son Jonathan is CEO of Exim Argentina.

Congratulations to  
**Exim Licensing Group, Inc.**

Guided by the leadership of Elías Hofman, Exim has exemplified professionalism and teamwork over the course of the past 25 years.

The firm's roster of licensors is a testament to the friendship and trust bestowed upon the Exim Team and the ascendant vision Elías has executed for the Latin American and U.S. Hispanic markets.

**Elías, we wish you  
and all of your group another 25!**  
The BrandsPlanet Team

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Colombia



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Venezuela



Peru



exim  
licensing group

Panama



Caribbean



Live Shows



El Salvador







Kevin Clash



David Di Lorenzo



Deborah Dugan



Coy Edmunds



Darran Garnham



Stephen Gould



Rosalind Nowicki



Cynthia Roe



Damien Tromel



Antoine Villeneuve

**4Kids Entertainment** (New York, New York, 212-590-2100): **Rosalind Nowicki** has been promoted from SVP to EVP of marketing and licensing and will now head up the company's consumer products division. Nowicki has been with 4Kids for six years and was chiefly responsible for building the Yu-Gi-Oh! brand outside of Japan.

She'll be working closely with **Carlin West**, who gets a similar bump up from SVP to EVP of acquisitions and development. West will pretty much be consumed with spearheading the launch and development of Chaotic, 4Kids' ground-breaking TCG-cum-MMOG, which is set to debut online and in comic and hobby stores this summer.

**4Kids Entertainment International** (London, England, 44-207-297-5980): It's taken the company some time to restructure its top tier in the wake of MD Simon Philips' defection to Marvel International in Q4 2006, and the new configuration sees three execs sharing the role as co-MDs. **Sandra Vauthier-Cellier** (formerly SVP of European licensing) will focus on the Euro market; **Stephen Gould** (previously SVP of UK licensing, retail and promotions) is charged with property acquisitions and overseeing consumer products activities in the UK; and Olivia Mellett (head of international finance) is in the driver's seat on finance, legal and operations.

**Entertainment Rights North America** (New York, New York, 212-763-8408): Mergers are always a little messy, and it can't help matters when an ocean separates the companies involved. So to keep things tidy as the dust settles on its acquisition of Classic Media and Big Idea earlier this year, the conglomerate has poached **Deborah Dugan** from Disney Publishing Worldwide to serve as CEO and president of Entertainment Rights North America. Based out of New York, Dugan will oversee day-to-day operations and mastermind initiatives that make the company's expanded brand portfolio work harder across TV & film, DVD & video, digital media, music and consumer products. As president of DPW, Dugan was responsible for 275 magazines and 4,000 book titles that generated US\$1.8 billion in global retail sales.

**Kidrobot** (New York, New York, 212-777-7735): As hip-hop hybrid series *Yo Gabba Gabba!* dances its way through production at Wild Brain, the studio's art merch subsidiary has brought in **Cynthia Roe** as

its very first CEO. The five-year-old company specializes in sussing out and partnering with new artists to create rare, collectible toys and apparel that are deeply rooted in urban street culture. And its in-house design team brought this same flavor to developing the character models for *Yo Gabba Gabba!* With a long history in the apparel business that includes stints at Polo Jeans and Sun Apparel, Roe will now focus her energies and expertise on expanding Kidrobot's business to include new product categories and additional Wild Brain entertainment properties.

**Kidz Entertainment** (Denmark, Copenhagen, 453-355-6100): Staffing up to tackle Eastern Europe in the wake of merging with EEMC, Europe's most ambitious licensing agency has recruited **Darran Garnham** as SVP of sales and marketing for the region. Garnham knows the territory like the back of his hand, having divided his focus between it and India as director of international sales for 4Kids International. In his new role, he'll be managing the pre-existing EEMC offices, developing relationships with key partners and scouting for new acquisition opportunities.

**Rubies Costume Company** (Melville, New York, 516-326-1500): The role-play product specialist has brought **Lauren Rabinowitz** over from the agency side of the business to manage licensor relations and scout for new properties as licensing manager. Prior to joining Rubies, Rabinowitz was an account executive at agency CopCorp Licensing.

**Sesame Workshop** (New York, New York, 212-875-6649): Muppet Captain **Kevin Clash** is rising in the ranks this month, having agreed to take on an expanded role as senior creative advisor. Clash started bringing Elmo to life 20 years ago and still performs regularly as the furry red *Sesame Street* star. And now he'll also provide creative input on a broader range of Workshop projects, including international versions of the signature show.

**Taffy Entertainment** (Los Angeles, California, 818-999-0062): Consumer products has obviously been targeted as a growing profit center at Taffy, which has expanded its licensing team under **Cynthia Money** with the addition of **David Di Lorenzo** as VP of retail marketing.

He's charged with managing merch programs and promotions across all retail tiers in North America, as well as liaising with licensees to develop sales and marketing strategies and identifying new business opps. Di Lorenzo recently spent a bit of time at DIC Entertainment as VP of retail development, but he really cut his teeth at Universal Studios Consumer Products Group, where he managed sales of licensed merch to 15 accounts and worked on programs for Cat in the Hat and the Curious George TV series.

**Toei Animation** (Los Angeles, California, 310-996-2240): The anime house has set up a new in-house licensing unit to manage the Digimon consumer products program in the US, and **Coy Edmunds** has been tapped to lead the effort as director of business development and licensing. Edmunds has been working in the world of sports of late, and left a position as director and agent for Focus Sports Management to join Toei.

**TV-Loonland** (Paris, France, 33-1-7061-7350): **Damien Tromel** has signed on as head of creative affairs and development, taking on responsibility for sourcing new projects and talent and supervising the editorial progress of projects in the TV-L pipeline. Tromel has a lot of experience in this vein and most recently worked on *Team Galaxy* as a storyboard supervisor at Marathon Media.

**Walt Disney Television India** (Mumbai, India, 91-22-5651-6630): **Antoine Villeneuve** is trading in croissants for curry this month as he moves south to become Disney Channel's new SVP and MD in India. Villeneuve has spent the past three years as VP and MD of Jetix France, presiding over the rebrand and then leading the channel to double its audience the next year. In his new post, he'll oversee a channel portfolio that includes Disney Channel, Toon Disney/Jetix and Hungama TV, which Disney acquired last year.

## Snyder hits the content lab to refocus CN

**B**ringing its corporate structure more in line with the multi-platform nature of the modern media biz, Turner Broadcasting System has pulled Stu Snyder away from his GM and VP position on its GameTap broadband venture to run three new aligned portfolios as EVP and COO of Animation, Young Adults and Kids Media.

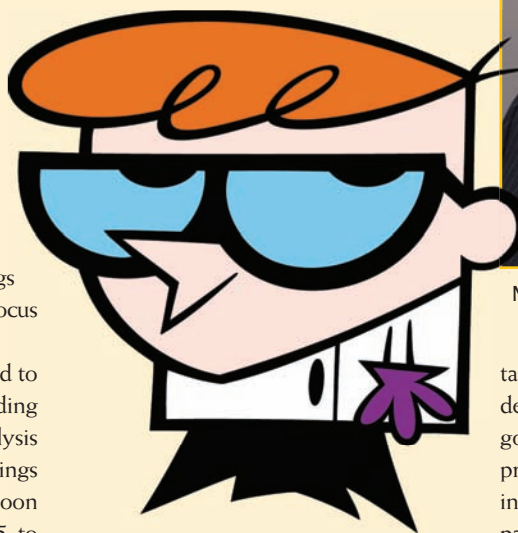
As part of his new role, Snyder will oversee assets including Cartoon Network, Boomerang, Cartoonnetwork.com and online broadband services Toonami Jetstream and Cartoon Network Video, and one of his first priorities after he bones up on the internal workings of the holdings he hasn't had a hand in will be to refocus Cartoon Network.

The channel has lost a little ground to Disney and Nick lately; in fact, according to MAGNA Global's most recent analysis of Nielsen ratings for Saturday mornings measuring kids ages two to 11, Cartoon fell from an average 2.29 in Q4 '05 to 1.93 for the same period in 2006.

Snyder says the turnaround will hinge on content. "For me, great shows drive everything. So I want us to be in business with the best, I want us to have the best shows, I want us to challenge ourselves when it comes to programming, I want us to better understand who our audience is and then develop and acquire shows for that audience.

Those are all the objectives I'll be working with the teams to achieve."

TBS president Mark Lazarus calls Snyder a builder, and he definitely has his eye on new kid connection opportunities, including user-generated content and social networking. This latter



activity will play out in the Cartoon Network MMOG that's in development at Seoul-based Grigon Entertainment for a spring 2008 rollout. "We'll put our content where consumers want our content," says Snyder. "It may be a little Wild, Wild West right now, but it's our obligation to try and test new things."

And if a new venture sticks, it'll no doubt get rolled into the already strong



Natural builder Stu Snyder sees content as the key to improving Cartoon's market position

targeted marketing proposition that Snyder is looking to bolster even further. The goal is to improve the way the team cross-programs content across all the platforms in its arsenal, and then work harder to partner with the advertising community on these events.

To get there, the company just poached Rico Hill to handle scheduling, on-air event planning and pick-ups for Cartoon and Boomerang as VP of programming and acquisitions. Hill worked his way up in the ranks at Nick over the last 10 years, finishing his run there as executive director of production and development for Nickelodeon Animation. **JC**





# How to reach

some of the key companies in this issue

## 4Kids Entertainment

New York, New York 212-590-2100  
www.4kidsentertainment.com

## Aardman Animations

Bristol, England 44-145-485-9000  
www.aardman.com

## Al Ovidia & Associates

Calabasas, California 818-591-7050  
www.alovadia.com

## American Greetings Properties

Cleveland, Ohio 216-252-7300  
www.agpbrands.com

## Big Tent Entertainment

New York, New York 212-604-0064  
www.bigtent.tv

## Brewster Wallcovering Company

Randolph, Massachusetts 781-963-4800  
www.brewsterwallcovering.com

## Cartoon Network International

London, England 44-207-693-1000  
www.cartoonnetwork.co.uk

## Character Arts

Wilton, Connecticut 203-761-6600  
www.characterarts.com

## Children's Fashion Europe

Valencia, Spain 34-96-391-0334  
www.childrensfashioneurope.com

## Classic Media

New York, New York 212-659-1959  
www.classicmedia.tv

## Coolabi

London, England 44-207-258-7080  
www.coolabi.com

## Cyber-Groupe Animation

Paris, France 33-1-4058-1443  
www.cyber-animation.com

## Daddytypes.com

Washington, DC 202-966-0586  
www.daddytypes.com

## Decode Entertainment

Toronto, Canada 416-363-8034  
www.decode-ent.com

## DIC Entertainment

Burbank, California 818-955-5400  
www.dicentertainment.com

## Digital Outlook

London, England 44-207-420-8220  
www.digital-outlook.com

## Disney Consumer Products

Burbank, California 818-560-1000  
www.disneyconsumerproducts.com

## Dreamworks Animation

Glendale, California 818-695-5000  
www.dreamworks.com

## Entertainment Rights North America

New York, New York 212-763-8408  
www.entertainmentrights.com

## EverythingGrandkids.com

Westport, Connecticut 914-509-2353  
www.everythinggrandkids.com

## Foothill Entertainment

Santa Barbara, California 805-965-4488  
www.foothillentertainment.com

## Gamania Digital Entertainment

Taipei, Taiwan 8862-8226-9166  
tw.gamania.com

## Gary Caplan Inc.

Studio City, California 818-980-1191  
www.garycaplaninc.com

## Granada Ventures

London, England 44-207-389-8555  
www.granadaventures.tv

## Hasbro

Pawtucket, Rhode Island 401-431-8697  
www.hasbro.com

## HIT Entertainment US

New York, New York 212-463-9623  
www.hitentertainment.com

## Joost

New York, New York 212-331-1290  
www.joost.com

## Lego Systems

Enfield, Connecticut 860-749-2291  
www.lego.com

## Lenz Entertainment

Toronto, Canada 416-966-6665  
www.lenzent.com

## Lionsgate Entertainment

Santa Monica, California 310-449-9200  
www.lionsgatefilms.com

## Little Airplane Productions

New York, New York 212-965-8999  
www.littleairplane.com

## Lucas Licensing

San Rafael, California 415-662-1800  
www.lucasfilm.com

## Marathon Media

Paris, France 33-1-4434-6600  
www.marathon.fr

## Mike Young Productions

Woodland Hills, California 818-999-0062  
www.mikeyoungproductions.com

## National Geographic Kids Entertainment

Los Angeles, California 310-858-5800  
www.nationalgeographic.com

## Nickelodeon & Viacom Consumer Products

New York, New York 212-846-8000  
www.nick.com

## The NPJ Group

Port Washington, New York 516-625-0700  
www.npd.com

## OTX Research

Los Angeles, California 310-736-3400  
www.otxresearch.com

## Planet Nemo Productions

Paris, France 33-1-4470-7020  
www.planetnemoprod.com

## Ridemakerz

Saint Louis, Missouri 314-593-3200  
www.ridemakerz.com

## Scholastic

New York, New York 212-343-6100  
www.scholastic.com

## Sesame Workshop

New York, New York 212-875-6649  
www.sesameworkshop.org

## Sony Pictures Consumer Products

Culver City, California 310-244-4000  
www.spe.sony.com

## Stars for Kidz

Ringwood, New Jersey 973-728-1785  
www.starsforkidz.com

## Strottman International

Irvine, California 949-852-1166  
www.strottman.com

## Taffy Entertainment

Woodland Hills, California 818-999-0062  
www.taffyentertainment.com

## The Sharpe Company

Manhattan Beach, California 310-545-6839  
www.sharpeco.com

## Toei Animation

Los Angeles, California 310-996-2240  
www.toei-anim.co.jp/english

## Turner Broadcasting System

Atlanta, Georgia 404-827-1700  
www.turner.com

## Twentieth Century Fox L&M

Los Angeles, California 310-369-1000  
www.fox.com

## Scenttv.tv

Savannah, Georgia 912-447-1096  
www.scenttv.tv

## Smarty Pants

New York, New York 203-847-5766  
www.asksmartypants.com

## Star Farm Productions

Chicago, Illinois 312-226-7130  
www.starfarmproductions.com

## Universal Studios Consumer Products Group

Universal City, California 818-777-8852  
www.unistudios.com



# Calendar of Events

Banff Television Festival	June 10-13	Banff, Canada	403-678-1216	www.bwtvf.com	TV
SGMA Spring Market	June 11-13	Las Vegas, NV	202-775-1762	www.sgmamarkets.com	Sp/App
Annecy	June 11-16	Annecy, France	33-4-5010-0900	www.annecy.org	Animation
Promax/BDA	June 12-14	New York, NY	310-788-9600	www.promax.org/conferences	Mktg/MM
Licensing 2007 International	June 19-21	New York, NY	203-882-1300	www.licensingshow.com	Licensing
DISCOP	June 20-22	Budapest, Hungary	33-1-4229-3224 (France)	www.discop.com	TV/Prod/Prog/MM
ASTRA Marketplace	June 24-27	Las Vegas, NV	312-222-0986	www.astratoy.org	Toys/Games
PLATFORM International Animation Festival	June 25-30	Portland, OR	818-508-9186	www.platformfestival.com	Animation
Tokyo Toy Show	June 28-July 1	Tokyo, Japan	81-3-3829-2513	www.toys.or.jp	Toys/Games
Hong Kong Licensing Show	July 3-6	Hong Kong	852-183-0668	www.hklicensingshow.com	Licensing
Tokyo International Book Fair	July 5-8	Tokyo, Japan	81-3-3349-8507	www.reedexpo.com	Publishing
E3 Media and Business Summit	July 11-13	Los Angeles, CA	508-875-3976	www.e3expo.com	Inter/Games
NATPE TV Producers Boot Camp	July 25-27	Los Angeles, CA	310-453-4440	www.natpe.org/calendar	TV/Prod/Prog
Comic-Con	July 26-29	San Diego, CA	619-491-2475	www.comic-con.org	Publishing
Little Airplane Academy	July 28-30	New York, NY	212-965-8999	www.littleairplane.com	Production
SIGGRAPH 2007	Aug. 5-9	San Diego, CA	312-321-6830	www.siggraph.org	Inter/Anim/MM
GC - Games Convention	Aug. 23-26	Leipzig, Germany	212-974-8841 (US)	www.gc-germany.de	Inter/Games
ABC Kids Expo	Sep. 7-10	Las Vegas, NV	210-691-4848	www.abckidsexpo.com	Mktg/Merch
Promo Expo	Sep. 17-19	Chicago, IL	508-743-0105	www.promoexpo.com	Promotions
Cartoon Forum	Sep. 19-22	Catalunya, Spain	322-242-9343 (Belgium)	www.cartoon-media.be	TV/Anim
Ottawa International Animation Festival	Sep. 19-23	Ottawa, Canada	613-232-8769	www.ottawa.awn.com	Animation
Brand Licensing 2007	Oct. 2-3	London, England	44-208-987-0970	www.brandlicensingexpo.com	Licensing
MIPCOM Jr.	Oct. 6-7	Cannes, France	33-1-4190-4400	www.mipcomjunior.com	TV/Prod/Prog
MIPCOM	Oct. 8-12	Cannes, France	33-1-4190-4400	www.mipcom.com	TV/Prod/Prog
Fall Toy Preview	Oct. 9-12	Dallas, TX	212-675-1141	www.toy-tia.org/ftp	Toys/Games
Frankfurt Book Fair	Oct. 10-14	Frankfurt, Germany	49-69-210-2256	www.frankfurt-book-fair.com	Publishing
Sportel Monaco	Oct. 15-18	Monte Carlo, Monaco	201-869-4022 (US)	www.sportelmonaco.com	Licensing
Shanghai Toy Expo & Licensing Show	Oct. 17-19	Shanghai, China	8621-6217-7777	www.chinalicensingshow.com	Licensing
American Film Market	Oct. 31-Nov. 7	Santa Monica, CA	310-446-1000	www.ifta-online.org	Film
LILA	Nov. 5-6	Mexico City, Mexico	212-627-5828 (US)	www.licensinginlatinamerica.com	Licensing
Cartoon Master Feature	Nov. 15-17	Potsdam, Germany	322-242-9353 (Belgium)	www.cartoon-media.be	Animation
Consumer Electronics Show	Jan. 7-10	Las Vegas, NV	703-907-7605	www.cesweb.org	Elec/Toys/Games
Hong Kong Toys & Games	Jan. 7-10	Hong Kong, China	852-2240-4435	www.hktoyfair.com	Toys/Games
Retail's BIG Show	Jan. 13-16	New York, NY	202-783-7971	www.nrf.com/annual08	Mfg/Dist
NATPE	Jan. 29-31	Las Vegas, NV	310-453-4440	www.natpe.org	TV/Prod/Prog
Nuremberg Toy Fair	Feb. 7-12	Nuremberg, Germany	49-91-1998-1316	www.nurembergtoyfair.com	Toys
KidScreen Summit	Feb. 13-15	New York, NY	416-408-2300 (Canada)	www.kidscreensummit.com	Prod/Prog/Lic
American International Toy Fair	Feb. 17-20	New York, NY	212-675-1141	www.toy-tia.org	Toys/Games
International Halloween Costume & Party Show	Mar. 16-19	Las Vegas, NV	800-323-5462	www.transworldexhibits.com	App/Lic/Merch
Bologna Children's Book Fair	Mar. 31-Apr. 3	Bologna, Italy	39-051-282-111	www.bookfair.bolognafiere.it	Publishing
MIPTV	Apr. 7-11	Cannes, France	33-1-4190-4400	www.miptv.com	TV/Prod/Prog
MILIA	Apr. 7-11	Cannes, France	33-1-4190-4400	www.milia.com	Inter/MM
London Book Fair	Apr. 14-16	London, England	44-208-271-2124	www.londonbookfair.co.uk	Publishing

## Industry Legend

Advertising-Ad  
Animation-Anim  
Apparel-App

Distribution-Dist  
Electronics-Elec  
Film-F

Games-Gam  
Home Entertainment-MHE  
Interactive-Inter

Licensing-Lic  
Manufacturing-Mfg  
Marketing-Mktg

Merchandising-Merch  
Multimedia-MM  
Production-Prod

Promotion-Promo  
Programming-Prog  
Publishing-Pub

Sports-Sp  
Toys-T  
TV-TV





coolwatch

**SpongeBob and popcorn a part  
of tube time for many kids**

## What is your favorite TV show?

### Boys 8-11 (253 kids)

SpongeBob SquarePants	12.6%
Suite Life of Zack & Cody	6.3%
Naruto	5.1%
Drake & Josh	4.3%
The Simpsons	4.3%

### Girls 8-11 (265 kids)

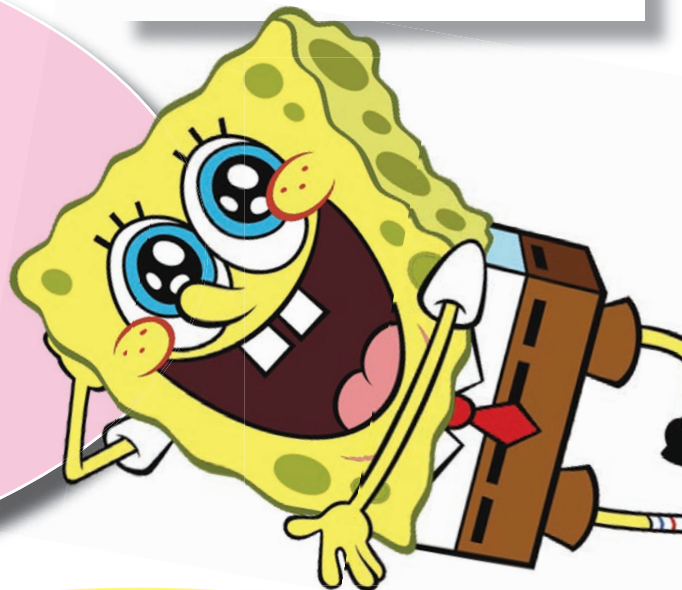
Hannah Montana	15.5%
Suite Life of Zack & Cody	12.8%
SpongeBob SquarePants	7.5%
That's So Raven	7.2%
Full House	3.8%

### Boys 12-15 (241 kids)

Family Guy	10.0%
The Simpsons	7.9%
South Park	5.4%
Naruto	3.3%
SpongeBob SquarePants	3.3%

### Girls 12-15 (253 kids)

SpongeBob SquarePants	5.5%
American Idol	5.1%
The Hills	4.7%
Hannah Montana	4.3%
Family Guy	3.6%



## What is your favorite food to eat while watching TV?

### Boys 8-11 (234 kids)

Popcorn	30.8%
Chips	15.0%
Pizza	9.8%
Meat	6.0%
Ice cream	4.3%

### Girls 8-11 (239 kids)

Popcorn	38.1%
Chips	18.4%
Ice cream	6.7%
Fruit	3.8%
Apple	2.1%

### Boys 12-15 (214 kids)

Chips	23.4%
Popcorn	22.0%
Pizza	7.5%
Ice cream	5.1%
Meat	3.7%

### Girls 12-15 (231 kids)

Popcorn	24.2%
Chips	22.5%
Ice cream	8.2%
Candy	5.2%
Pizza	5.2%



Research tidbits found in this feature are extracted from the April/May 2007 issue of KidSay's Trend Tracker, a syndicated study published five times a year that breaks down what's cool and what's not according to 1,000 American kids ages eight to 15. KidSay, an 11-year-old full-service kids market research firm, works with schools and youth organizations in hundreds of U.S. cities to collect and analyze data about trends emerging in the categories of entertainment, famous people/characters, internet, food/beverage, spending, toys and lifestyle. If you'd like more information about Trend Tracker, please contact Bob Reynolds by phone (866-273-8555/913-390-8110) or by e-mail ([bob@kidsay.com](mailto:bob@kidsay.com)).

# Coming next in KidScreen...

**July  
2007**

**RadarScreen**  
**Digital Bytes Q&A with THQ VP of licensing**  
**Comic Book Feature**  
**Teletoon 10th Anniversary Tribute**

**September  
2007**

**Brand licensing report**  
**Fall TV report**  
**Market Watch feature on the U.K.**  
**Working the Market: a MIP Jr. service report**  
**Cartoon Forum sneak peek**  
**Bonus distribution at: Brand Licensing Europe, Cartoon Forum, MIPJr., LA Roadshow, Ottawa International Animation Festival**

**October  
2007**

**MIPCOM report**  
**Revisiting digital rights management platform by platform**  
**Cool New Shows**

**Bonus distribution at: MIPCOM**

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- Full licensed roll-out in Summer 2008

**Hasbro**  
**BOOTH #3417**



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